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THE SPHERE, JANUARY 11, 1941
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Vol. CLXIV No. 2138 WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE GRAPHIC JANUARY 11 1941

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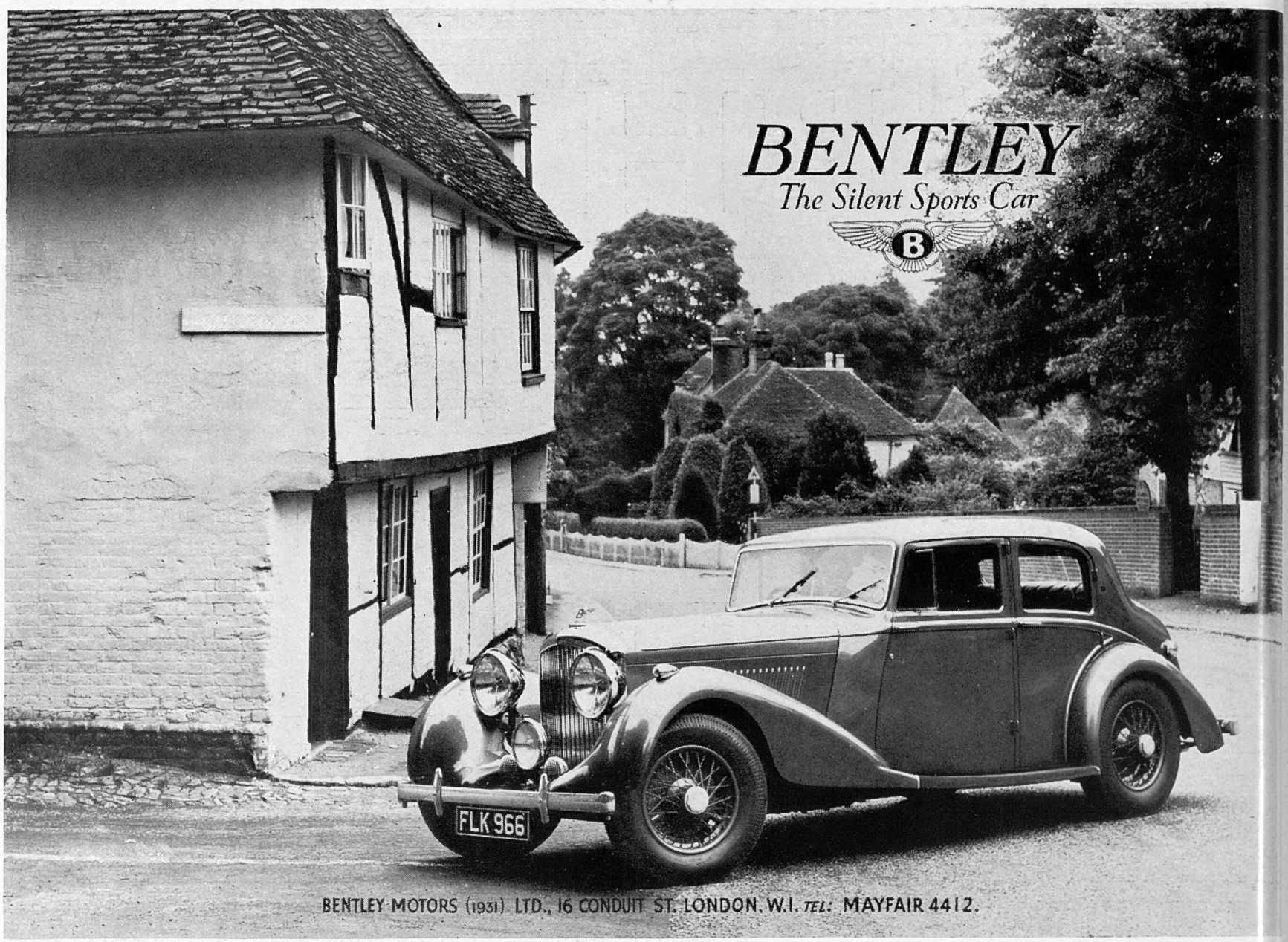
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THE SPHERE
With which is incorporated "THE GRAPHIC"
The Empire's Illustrated Weekly
London, January 11, 1941

NEARLY 100,000 ITALIANS OUT OF ACTION ALREADY IN LIBYA: TYPES OF THE SOLDIERS NOW TAKEN PRISONER

After the evacuation of Dunkirk and all the heavy fighting involved in that operation, it was estimated that some 44,000 British soldiers had been made prisoner by the Germans. But—in Libya alone—since the present struggle began on December 9, fully 70,000 Italians have actually been captured and a total of 94,000 put out of action. And all this in the space of less than a month. This does not take into account the prisoners taken by our gallant Greek allies, the number of which is also considerable. It would be idle to pretend that all these men now lost to Italy are weaklings: the above picture would give the lie to this. The men seen above were actually captured in Greece, big, strong, tough-looking material—if they had their heart in the fighting, that is! That they have not is evidenced by the manner in which both Sidi Barrani and Bardia fell, as well as by the manner in which they have succumbed to the Greeks in Albania. The tally of 70,000 men captured or destroyed in Libya is made up as follows: Three Italian regular divisions—the 62nd, 63rd, and 64th; two Blackshirt divisions—the 1st and 2nd; and two Libyan divisions—the 1st and 2nd, together with the Maletta mechanised group. A regular Italian division consists of 13,000 men, a Blackshirt division of 12,000 and a Libyan division of 7,000. In addition to the actual fighting troops may be added 10,000 as supply and corps troops, and some 6,000 or 7,000 men in the mechanised groups—a total of 94,000 prisoners or casualties

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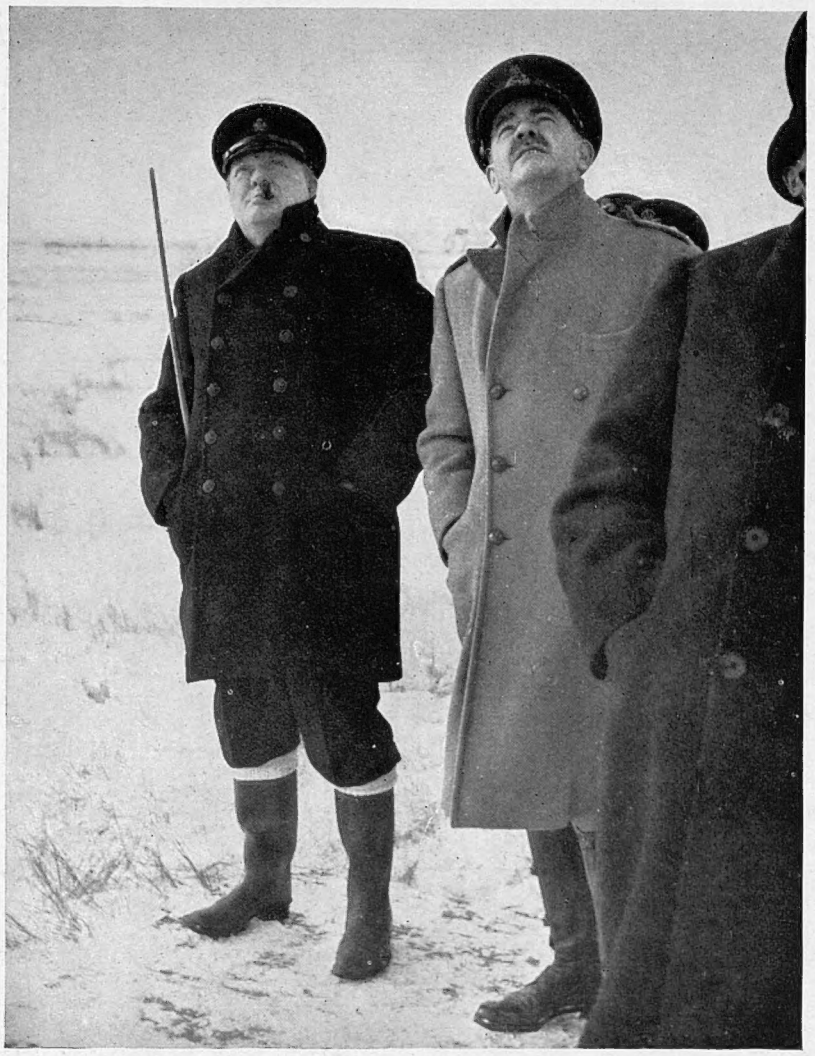
A WAR NEWSLETTER—No. 71

32-34, ST. BRIDE STREET, E.C.4

TO 1941.—The last few years have proved so terrible in their events and implications, that every year's end, when I attempted a review of events in the past twelve months, I finished with a prophecy that the coming year at least could not be more deeply invested with tragedy and doom for civilisation. At the end of 1940 I found I could not attempt any review of events, or venture to make that frail prophecy again. We have done with 1940, with its fearful disasters and glorious episodes, its endless anxieties and labours, its terrors and its heroism, its glorious achievements and advances, and its tragic losses and reverses. It may well be that 1941 holds for us tragedy more terrible and calls for heroism and unselfishness and industry even more strenuous. It must be in many ways an even more fearful and portentous year—our fate and the fate of civilisation still hang in the balance and, if we have stemmed defeat, victory is still to be hewn out from the solid rock. At such a time as this, it is natural for men to suspect their neighbours of weakening. To weaken is to betray the common cause. Cheerfulness and resolution are vital to all, as vital as selfless industry and unquestioning loyalty. But let us remember this—one part of our war aims is to outlaw war, to make impossible again for two generations at least the nameless tragedy in which we are engulfed for the second time in the life of a single generation. To be grim and gay is no doubt our duty, but there is no advantage in concealing the grimness of war. To stress the bestiality and futility of modern warfare is not defeatism, nor is it altogether useless. To recognise it as the vile thing it is cannot weaken the effort of those who use its hideous weapons because they must, in a righteous cause and for bare survival. Those who use them under compulsion and in an ignoble cause must weaken in their purpose every time they are reminded of the obscene and insane business to which they are pledged. I repeat, there is no defeatism in stressing war's futility and horror. The spirit of heroism is hardly sufficient to dignify triumphs with weapons so vile. Treachery and defeatism are comprised in throwing doubt on the ultimate triumph of justice, but not in deploring the weapons by which it must be gained. And patriotism and citizenship to-day are not to see war through rose-coloured spectacles; but to endure and obey and help and comfort, without illusions and without blinkers. Sweetest the bloom that blossoms on the dungheap, rarest the treasure found in the midden.

THE GHOSTS OF FLEET STREET. — Recently, a foreign friend expressed to me an interest in the history and antiquities of Fleet Street. I remembered that years ago I had written a little guide-book on the subject, profusely illustrated by Joseph Pike's pleasant drawings. I found and bestowed a copy on my friend, telling him that perhaps he would never now see the originals of many of the drawings. On the very day of receipt, 80 per cent. of those originals had ceased to exist. The Huns had wiped them out; the grand old Wren churches, corners of the old Inns of Court, Doctor Johnson's house in Gough Square (Mecca of thousands of Americans), Nevill's Court, that hidden nest of old houses which survived the earlier Great Fire, and the rest of those treasured ghosts of Fleet Street, its ancient glories and dear memories. What choice of words can attempt to describe our sorrow, or our loathing, for this insensate barbarity which, achieving no military advantage for the enemy, only stiffens our determination to continue the struggle until victory is complete and justice done to the guilty and to their victims? There are crimes too vile to be spoken of, deeds done from which the sun hides her face. I dare say that in all Europe no man to-day feels more terribly the weight of shame for his own nation than does the ex-Kaiser at Doorn, when he thinks of the past and of the Guildhall. Indeed, I pity the old man, and do not envy him his ration of years beyond man's allotted span. The memories of his own past, combined with constant proofs of his nation's present state, must provide him with a hell out of all proportion to his deserts. We have done with words. We have used them up. The restraint with which the Press and public received this outrage proves it. We may differ as to the method, but never were we so united as to the principle, of replying by deeds to every brutality of the Huns. And reply we shall and effectively, despite the handicap which lies heavy on a nation which fights an enemy whose only traditions are pagan, whose only law is brutal, insensate destruction, and whose capital would be æsthetically better a heap of rubble. The offices of THE SPHERE must have been almost the centre and axis of this wheel of fire; and they have suffered in consequence. I know that the labours of production, already heavy, must be greatly increased, and I offer to that fine journal, with good wishes for the New Year and such luck as may be, my sympathy and congratulations.



THE PRIME MINISTER WATCHES AN ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEMONSTRATION

Mr. Winston Churchill recently visited a Royal Artillery establishment to see a demonstration of anti-aircraft gunnery. He was accompanied by a number of Naval, Army and Air Force officers. The Premier was well protected against the bitterly cold weather and sported the inevitable cigar!

THE AUTOCRAT OF THE TEA-TABLE.—Mr. Roosevelt's fireside talk is accomplished. It raised an immense stir in America and Europe and the East in anticipation of what it might contain. The Isolationists foresaw America definitely committed to war within a few weeks. The other extreme of American thought feared that the President's efforts still further to increase the tempo of production and of financial and other aid to Britain would be but half measures and vague promises. Now, the autocrat of the tea-table has spoken to twenty million firesides—and where stands the hope of democracy? But, first, a note on autocrats. Autocrat, dictator, tyrant, these are words of fear or loathing in democratic ears. The world outside America regards Mr. Roosevelt in his newly confirmed position—President for a definite term once more and definitely for the last time—as a State leader with almost autocratic powers. There is now no longer any possibility that political strategy could influence his personal judgment of external events, or his decisions arising from that judgment. His decisions henceforth may decide his own place in history, but no longer his career in American politics. Those who most firmly support him in America are constantly concerned to show the world how constitutionally democratic he is, how almost excessively approachable, how willing to listen to advice and to share his knowledge with any sound and patriotic American of whatever age, or standing. We are given pictures of him presiding at his famous Press conference, surrounded by reporters young and old, calling them by their nicknames, joking with them, and allowing himself to be hustled and "barracked" and criticised by the youngest of his audience, in perfect good humour and with a rare humility. That picture is no great exaggeration, even if it is thrown on the screen for propaganda purposes, to dispel the democratic bogy of autocracy. And now this most famous fireside talk is over: and where are we? If words mean anything, the President left no scintilla of doubt as to what was in his mind. There was no "damned neutrality" about his speech. He ranged himself behind and beside Britain and Greece and the Allied Governments in exile in a fight to the finish against the accursed tyrants, holding back nothing at all, save only an expeditionary force to Europe. He pledged himself for his nation to turn America into the arsenal of the democratic *bloc*, and to lose not an hour more in achieving 100 per cent. output and 100 per cent. assistance. *Nothing short of* 100 *per cent. will be enough.* We know that Mr. Roosevelt's words may be relied on as representing his unalterable opinion and determination. It only remains to ascertain the extent of his "autocracy." Can he, or how soon can he, implement his words by deeds? We know—none better—that the wheels of a free democracy move slowly. We know—none better—that until the bombs fall on our own houses, it is slow work converting the wobblers to resolution, the appeasers to unrelenting attack, and the ostriches to the long view. The next few months will prove the extent of Mr. Roosevelt's autocracy or of the change in American public opinion towards the urgent menace of Hitlerism to the Western Hemisphere. Those coming months spell victory or defeat.

THE LIGHT THAT WINS.—I would not say that "spring is round the corner." I am not known as an optimist incorrigible. It is only early January yet, and winter is probably as to 75 per cent. ahead of us. But I do say that the light is coming back. No more boiled egg by lamp-light. No more black-out shaving. Normally, henceforth, the time-honoured routine of pulling back the curtains can attend the ceremony of "calling" those who still sleep in beds. The hounds of spring are not yet on winter's traces, the rains and the ruins are far from over, but once more it is the *night* that loses and the *light* that wins. And that brings especial comfort in this vendetta of night bombing. For, if we still seek effective measures to cope with bombing by night, we are not now very much disturbed or dis-composed by day bombing. And, at the worst of it, day bombing leaves the attacked with all the powers and facilities which nature and experience have given them for coping with the lamentable affliction and for taking effective measures by way of precaution, reparation and reprisal. "By heaven, the bold sun is with me in the room, shining, shining." The turn of the year is first noticeable clearly in early January, and half Europe welcomes it as never before. An abridged edition of *The City of Dreadful Night* is every Book Society's Book of the Month. *Sursum corda.* I feel it in my bones that by next January we shall sleep more easily and securely.

FALL OF BARDIA.—Bardia has fallen, its defences stormed by the irresistible drive of the Australians; its garrison of over 25,000 men are mostly dead or prisoners; and considerable material fell into our hands. The fall of Bardia and the prizes won are important; the significance of the fall is more so. To the Italian propagandists, Bardia was a symbol—while it looked as if it might hold out—of Fascist unity and strength, and of Imperial pride. *Our* finest stroke of propaganda was the citation of recent Italian utterances on the symbolism of Bardia, immediately after the announcement of its fall. Now no doubt Gayda and Ansaldo (the Jackal's jackals) have removed the symbol to Tobruk. While the Fleet and the Air Force and our field-guns battered the defenders and defences day and night before the assault, the Blackshirts had time to reflect on the difference between a war of words and a war of deeds. Some of them may have concluded that the man who conducts the former should experience the latter form; and that he who incites a nation to cross the threshold between neutrality and war should follow, if not lead, the fighting men into the realities of a modern battlefield—which are grim enough. But Gayda and Ansaldo still sit at their desks, if they no longer incite to war so boldly and so hopefully. I think that their heyday is over; these babblers have much to explain away and a heavy feast of words to eat and digest.

THE OLD STAGER

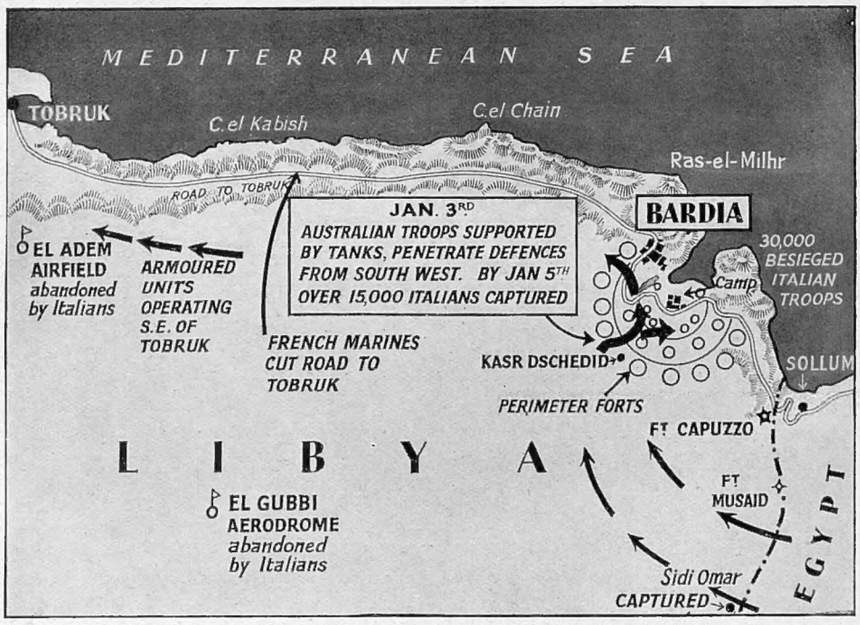
FIVE NEW BRITISH BATTLESHIPS READY: *The "Duke of York," the Last of the Five, at Her Launching*

THE NEW BATTLESHIP, AT HER LAUNCHING BY THE QUEEN ON CLYDESIDE: THERE ARE NOW FIVE VESSELS OF THIS CLASS READY

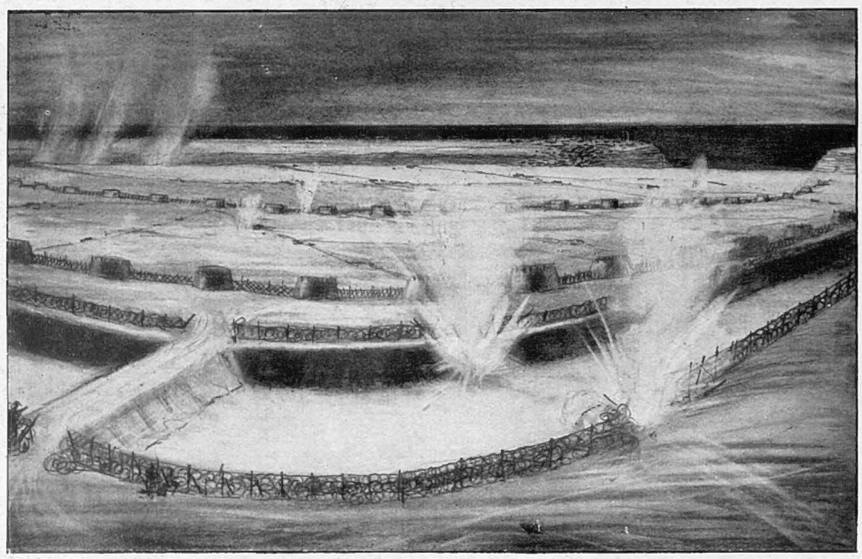
Their Majesties the King and Queen, during one of their visits to the shipyards on the Clyde, took part in the launching of the *Duke of York*, another battleship for the British Navy. This vessel is now ready; and thus our battle fleet has been strengthened by the addition of still another 35,000-ton capital ship: it now has all five of the £7,000,000 super-battleships of the King George V class laid down in 1937. The four other vessels of this class are the *King George V*, *Prince of Wales*, *Jellicoe* and *Beatty*. When they were laid down it was stated that they were to have ten 14-in. guns with a greater effective range than the 15-in. guns of earlier ships, and a speed of 30 knots. These capital ships will help to ensure the maintenance of Britain's might at sea. The picture *on the right* shows the Queen actually performing the launching ceremony on Clydeside

THE VICTORY AT BARDIA

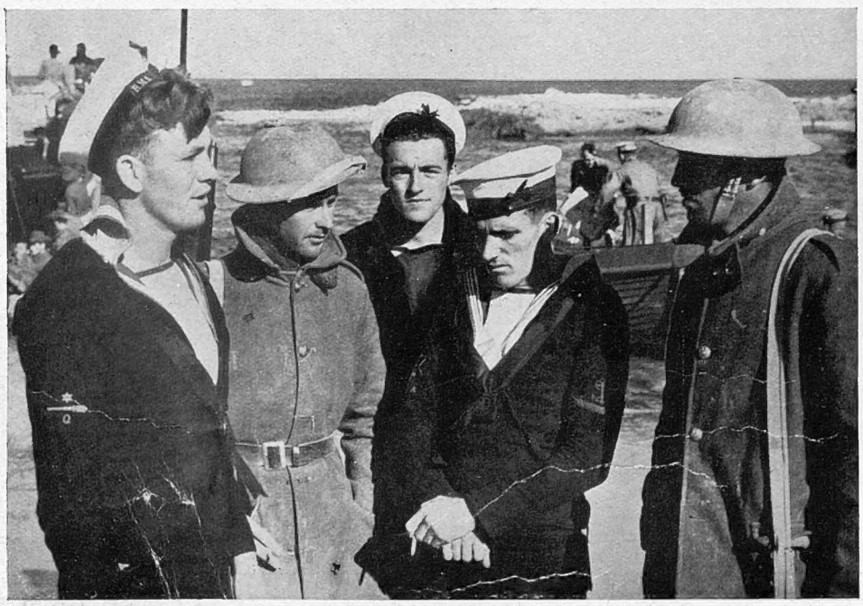
With the Capture of 30,000 Italian Prisoners at the Price of 400 Australian Casualties



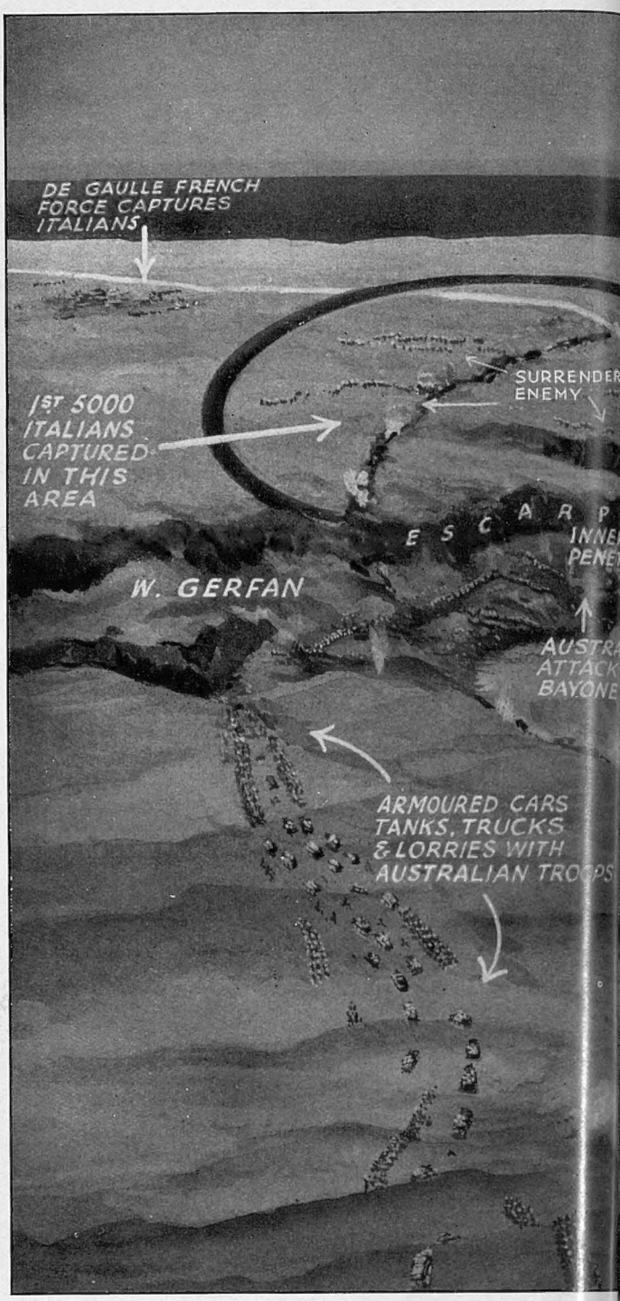
THE AREA IN WHICH THE OPERATIONS TOOK PLACE : After the taking of Sidi Barrani, it was suggested that a considerable pause might take place, but in a bare fortnight British and Imperial forces had advanced westwards towards Bardia and even penetrated farther afield in the direction of Tobruk. Advances were made by way of Sidi Omar which was rapidly taken, and the main attack developed against Bardia, as detailed on the opposite page. Mobile units pressed on westwards, and at the time of writing, it was difficult to say just how far they had got. They were for the time out of touch with their bases. El Gubbi aerodrome was occupied by one force, and El Adem was abandoned by the Italians



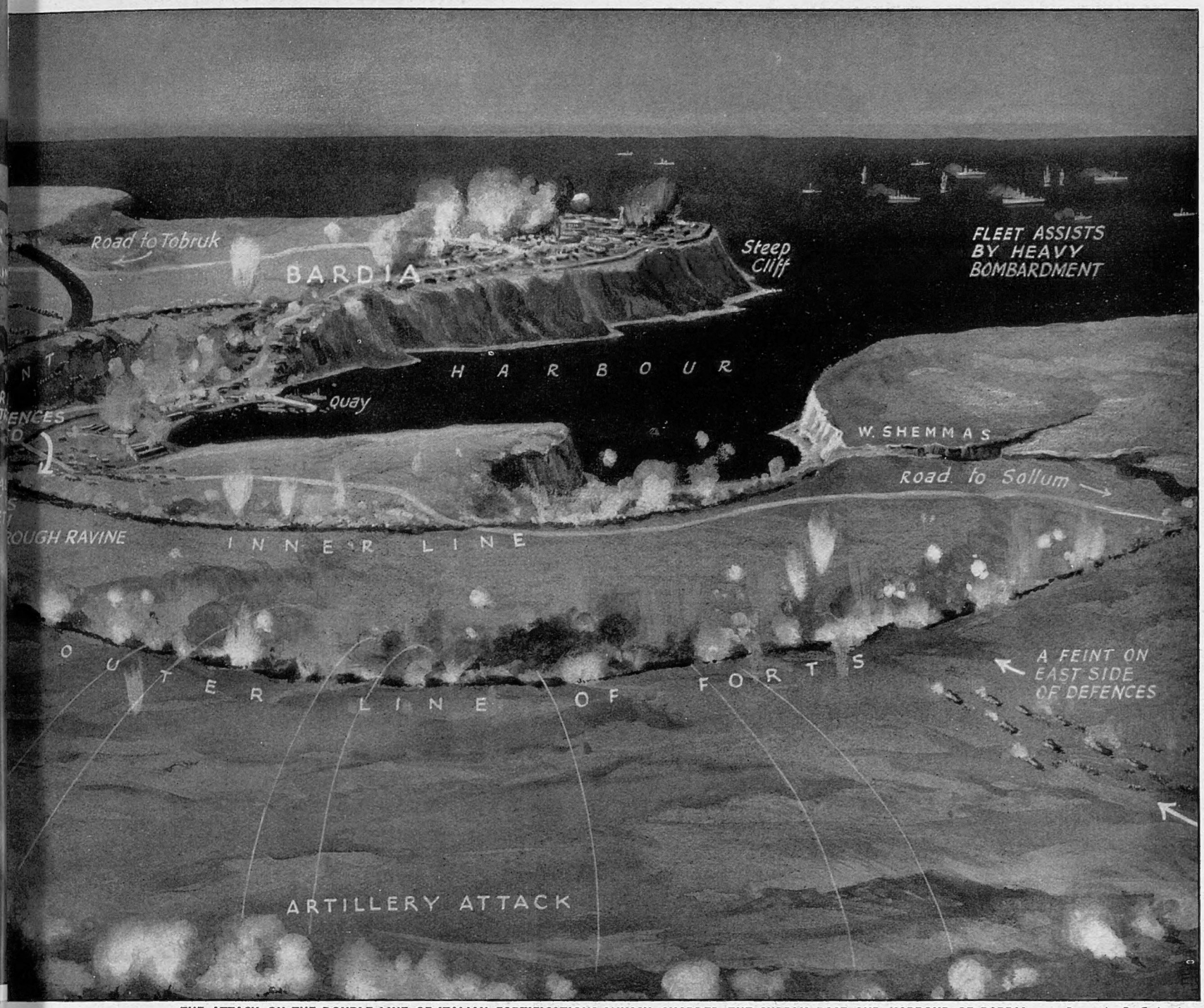
HOW THE SAPPERS MADE A PATH FOR THE BRITISH TANKS : Surrounding the whole outer line of defences at Bardia was a tank ditch constructed by the Italians to guard the base and harbour behind them. The ditch was some 16 ft. wide and guarded by lines of barbed wire. Engineers crept up to this wire and as one man was picked off, another took his place. Then, the wire cut, the Engineers succeeded in blowing up the sides of the trench, and with the soil thus disturbed, made a track across which the tanks passed. Once across the ditch the tanks broke through and attacked the forts in rear



THE NAVY CO-OPERATED WITH THE ARMY THROUGHOUT THE OPERATIONS : All during the Sidi Barrani and Bardia operations the Navy was standing off the Libyan coast, pounding any desired point with terrific effect and without the slightest sign of opposition from the remnants of the Italian Navy. Naval parties from time to time came ashore for various purposes, and here is one at Sidi Barrani

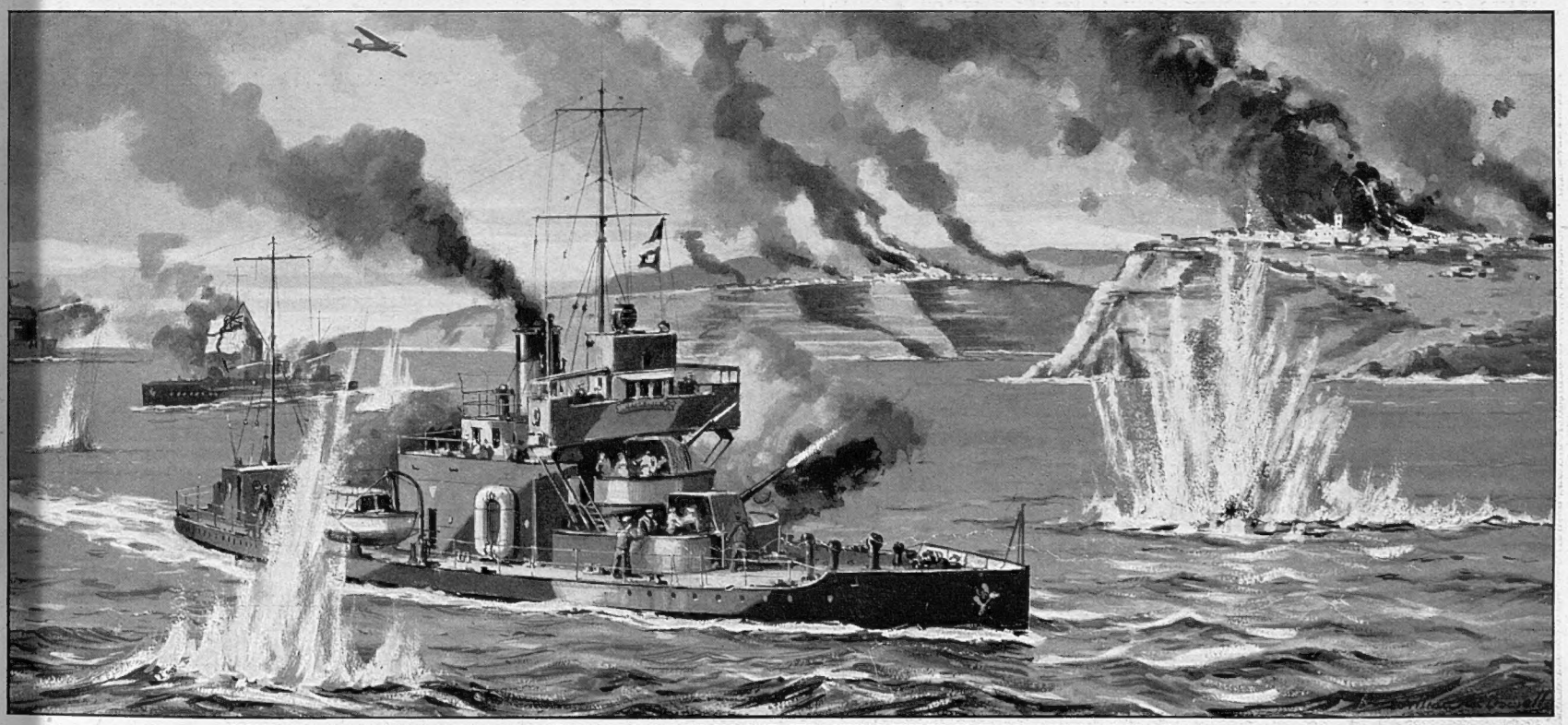


ITALIAN PRISONERS WAITING FOR TRANSPORTATION TO EGYPTIAN QUARTERS : They are assisting in the transfer of stores from a British ship off the Sidi Barrani coast. The prisoners formed a chain along which goods were passed from the lighters to the shore



THE ATTACK ON THE DOUBLE LINE OF ITALIAN FORTIFICATIONS WHICH GUARDED THE SUPPLY BASE AND HARBOUR OF BARDIA *Drawn by E. G. Lambert*

On Friday, after careful preparation, the attack on the Italian prepared positions in front of Bardia was launched. It was carried out by Australian troops in conjunction with British tanks and armoured units. The co-operation between the two was perfect; Australian troops said they would go anywhere with the British tanks, and go anywhere they did. The first attack succeeded in capturing 5,000 prisoners and opening the way for a further advance. There was a feint of considerable strength to the east, in order to distract the enemy, while the main attack broke through farther to the west. This attack reached the Wadi Gerfan where the Italians had erected buildings and stored an immense quantity of material. This fiord is indicated in the above drawing running from the west to the outer bluff of the harbour on the right. The Australians captured this ravine which had been bombed by the R.A.F. previously, stormed the lower town and climbed to the upper cliffs and completed the capture of Bardia town and the whole of the fortified lines constructed by the Italians. Some 30,000 prisoners were made, haggard, unshaven figures who appeared in many cases to be glad to surrender. The stiffest resistance had been put up on the high ground above the ravine



HOW THE NAVY ASSISTED BY BOMBARDING BARDIA FROM THE SEA, USING THREE FLAT-BOTTOMED CRAFT FOR THE PURPOSE *Drawn by W. McDowell*

At one period of the bombardment, close-in fire was accomplished by the use of flat-bottomed gunboats, *Aphis*, *Ladybird* and *Terror*. *Aphis* carried only 6-in. guns, but these craft are so shallow in draught that they "can float on a wet pavement." The *Terror* is a heavier monitor and would not be able to get so close into Bardia harbour as the gunboats. She came specially from the Orient for this task. All three vessels did excellent work in breaking up the Italian defences of Bardia and reducing the morale of the defenders

The MEN who are BEATING the ITALIANS

Australians with their Tanks in the Western Desert; and Our Allies from West and East

INDIANS IN THE WESTERN DESERT: Men of a Bren-gun carrier platoon of an Indian Rifle Regiment. These troops have adapted themselves remarkably well to mechanisation, and are doing good work in the Desert, where the conditions approximate those in their own country

MAJOR-GENERAL IVEN GIFFARD MACKAY, who commands the Australians who captured Bardia. He was formerly a schoolmaster

MECHANISED CAVALRY OF TO-DAY ON THE MOVE: These armoured vehicles form part of the Australian forces; they are capable of transporting machine-guns and men at high speed over almost any ground

SOLDIERS OF FREE FRANCE WHO TOOK PART IN THE ATTACK ON BARDIA: These are men of the French Colonial Infantry, who left Syria to join General de Gaulle's forces. At Bardia they were allotted positions astride the road to Tobruk and thus were able to prevent an Italian sortie from the doomed fortress

AN AUSTRALIAN BREN-GUN CARRIER TACKLES THE DESERT RIDGES
The cross-country performance and pace of these little vehicles is truly astonishing

POLISH TROOPS ARE ALSO CO-OPERATING WITH THE BRITISH FORCES AND HAVE SHARED IN THE FIGHTING AND THE VICTORIES IN THE WESTERN DESERT. POLISH CAVALRYMEN ARE KNOWN AS AMONGST THE WORLD'S BEST HORSEMEN

A NEW TWO-POUNDER ANTI-TANK GUN OF THE BRITISH ARMY

Thirty thousand prisoners at a cost of 400 casualties to the attackers! Following on Sidi Barrani, when 38,000 prisoners were taken at a cost of less than 80 attackers killed, it demonstrates what can be achieved when resolute men attack with suddenness and determination. In the final assault on Bardia, tanks and bayonets both played a large part. But, above all, the tough, resolute Australians let nothing come between them and their objectives. Within a total period of 55 hours the attack—from beginning to end—was over; and Bardia, "Bastion of Fascism," was flying the British flag!

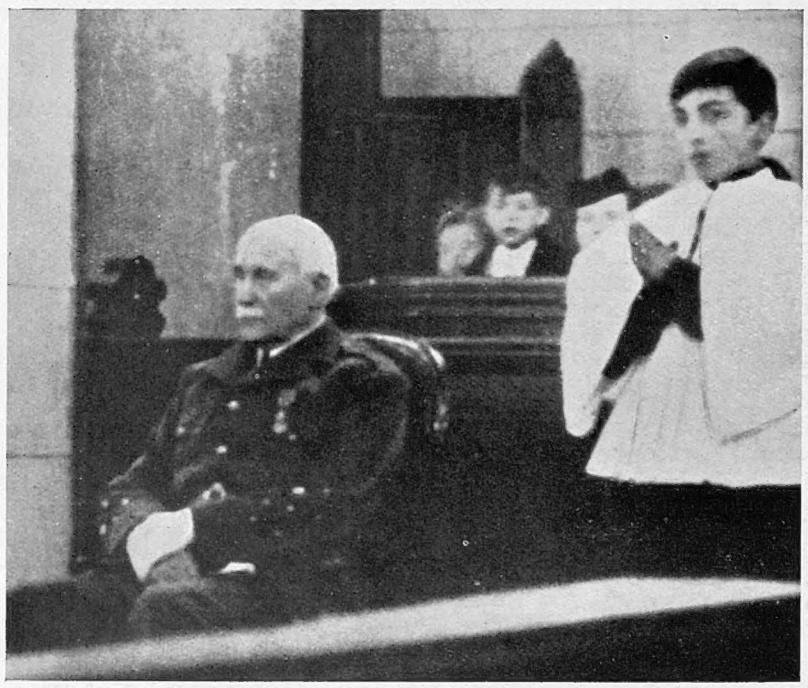
IT'S THE MEN WHO FINALLY WIN BATTLES—WHETHER IN THE MAGINOT LINE OR IN THE DESERTS OF LIBYA!

This picture, taken during manœuvres but in the same type of country as at Bardia, shows how the attack on the Italians was made—the Australian Infantry are moving up under cover in dispersed packets. They followed up the tanks and gun-carriers in this fashion and swept all opposition aside, capturing thousands of prisoners without effective opposition

THE MECHANISED CAVALRY OF TO-DAY—AN IMPRESSIVE PICTURE OF MOTOR VEHICLES OPERATING IN THE DESERT

These are Australian Bren-gun carriers moving up in battle formation to the assault. As they move across the firm sand these fast-moving vehicles throw up clouds of dust. The Italians found they could not stop these mechanised units, despite their elaborate fortifications around Bardia and their deep anti-tank trenches reinforced with barbed wire

From FRANCE and RUMANIA

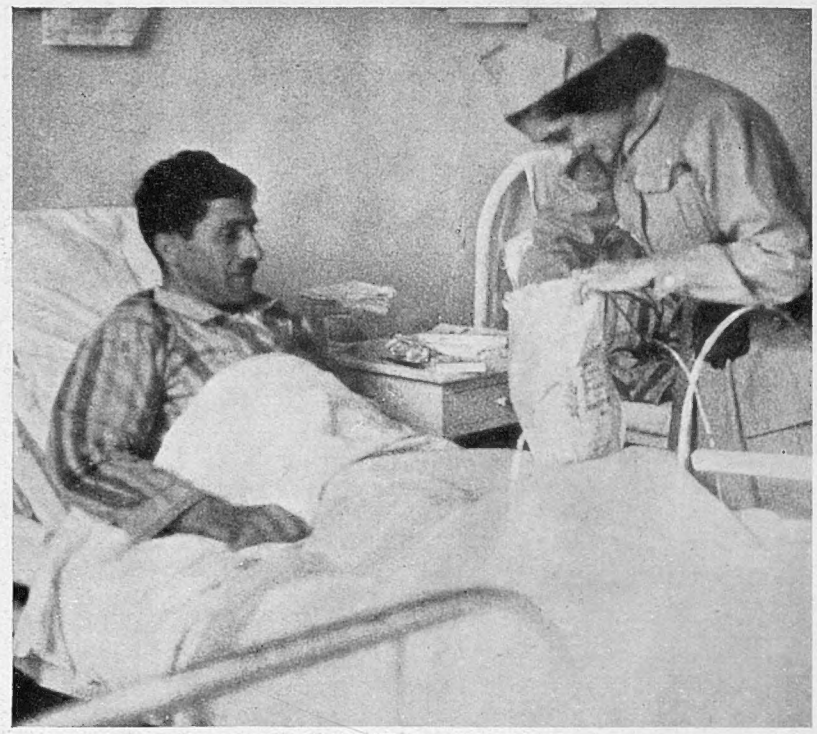


THE AGED RULER OF HALF OF FRANCE : Marshal Pétain, fully looking his great age, at a Vichy church where a Mass was said for French soldiers lost in the war. The Marshal's public appearances, even in his own "capital," are now very rare

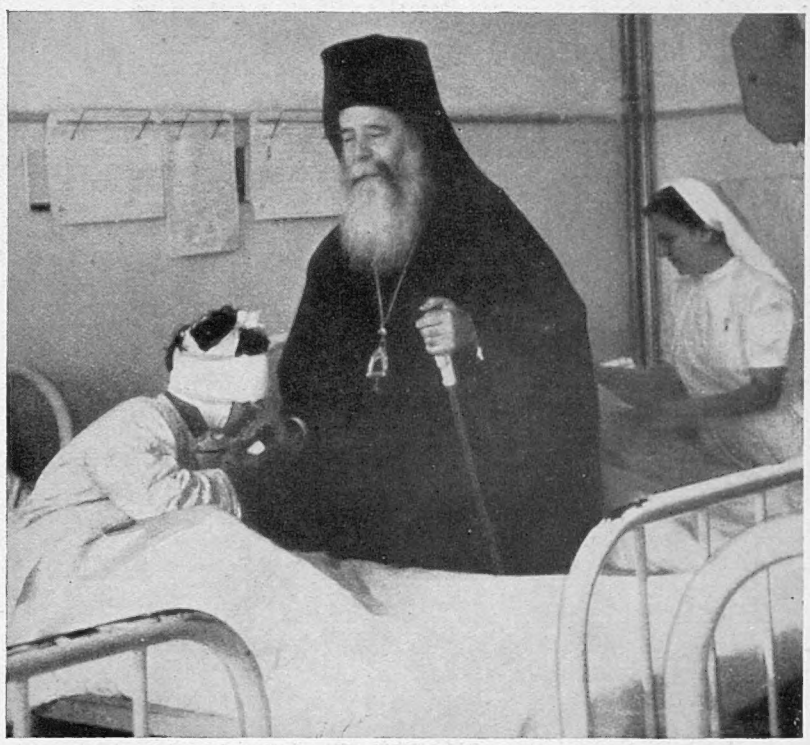
GERMANS BEING REPATRIATED FROM RUMANIA : These German peasants are being repatriated from Bessarabia which has been taken over by Russia. They are here seen on arrival at the Rumanian border ; they will winter in special quarters newly constructed for this purpose in Rumania itself, and will later be returned to Germany. Some 125,000 Germans are taking part in this big mass movement—not the first, incidentally, carried out under Hitler's own orders. Apparently, he regards even his own nationals as mere pawns !

GERMAN TROOPS GOOSE-STEP THROUGH THE STREETS OF BUCHAREST : One of the first pictures to be received in this country of German troops *en masse* on the march in Rumania. In this case they are goose-stepping through the streets of the capital itself. Large numbers of German troops have been reported in Rumania for some time past ; estimates have put the figure as high as 250,000

PICTURES from GREECE



BRITISH GIFTS FOR GREEK WOUNDED : In a ward in a hospital at Athens—an Englishwoman visits the wounded from the Albanian front and brings gifts from Britain



THE GREEK PRIMATE VISITS THE WOUNDED : The Archbishop of Athens and Primate of All Greece gives his Blessing to a wounded Greek soldier from the Pindus fron

GREEK SOLDIERS INSPECTING SOME OF THE ITALIAN WAR SUPPLIES CAPTURED DURING THE ADVANCE ON KORITZA

(Further Greek pictures on page 53 of this issue)

DARLAN MOUNTS THE BRIDGE IN FRANCE

The Naval "Marshal" Who has Become the Second Most Important Figure Across the Channel; and an Analysis of the Reasons for His Strong Anti-British Attitude

IN fixing its attention on Laval from June to December this country failed to distinguish that Laval's co-apostle of vengeance (against Britain), Admiral Jean François Darlan, was the Vichyssois with the real weight behind him. Laval was too low a person for survival. So despised a one could never carry his policies, was bound to come a cropper. Laval embodied little but Lavalism or treacherous pursuit of power, and all his cleverness was not enough.

The Admiral appeared in very different guise both to Pétain and to the average Frenchman. To begin with, the cleansing suggestion of the sea: here was a sailor free of accursed politics. One of whom nothing save good had ever been heard, and who had beaten all records in his honoured service—had not Darlan been ranked as a Marshal of France on assuming supreme authority in that new French Navy he had done so much to create? "Darlan gave us back our maritime pride."

The French knew more about Darlan than that. They knew he was "a brain," "a force." No ordinary admiral, but as telling off the sea as on it. They had read at the outbreak of war of "an admirable capacity for work, a range of mind that liberally covers all the complicated technical and political problems presented to the Navy, a sureness of judgment that at once finds precise and satisfactory solutions, a lucid boldness in initiating progress, an energy that is a match for all responsibilities, an uprightness and loyalty which give absolute security to all." These composed "the big and solid character of this chief without a peer and justify the unanimous esteem and confidence that surround him in the Navy."

The war didn't do much to modify the above in Frenchmen's eyes. Why, Churchill himself had added his praise. Thanks to the assiduous attention of Admiral Darlan, a magnificent Fleet for battle and for controlling the seas had been created. Not only had it brought Britain all the help that had been foreseen before the war, but it had undertaken heavy additional tasks. In effect, the Pound-Darlan collaboration continued unabated, as evidenced by Admiral Abrial gaining the C.B. for helping the B.E.F. off Dunkirk.

Yet a fortnight later Mr. Alexander was flying to Bordeaux in an attempt to get Darlan to remove his Fleet from all risk of Axis clutching. The Admiral was evasive, and when it became known that his had been one of the earliest and most influential voices for the armistice, his reasoning was given thus:

Britain did not send the forces contracted for, and therefore had broken the alliance first. That being so, and the war being already lost, she had no right to charge France with treachery, much less try and drag her down further.

Now here was a crucial moment. Mr. Churchill's eyes were first and foremost on Darlan's splendid 600,000 tons Fleet, the newest sailing the seas and the second most practised. Its chief was acting on the premiss that we had given France ground for backing out. Why was not Ambassador Corbin quoted direct to Darlan? "We must be loyal. Britain has fulfilled her engagements. The dates were fixed for the constitution of the British divisions and the dates were respected. Our error was not to have asked our Allies immediately for as many divisions as in 1914. The fame of the defensive power of our lines and fortifications blinded our Ministers and General Staff."

If Darlan was ignorant of this exculpation, it is less simple to explain his attitude a few days later when Mr. Churchill offered his Fleet safety in distant waters. The bulk of the French nation still ignores this, while it can be taken for granted that the Fleet was never informed at the time. So there followed "Oran," when we were supposed to have treacherously crept upon vessels in harbour. Darlan held that his word that he would never surrender the Fleet ought to have been sufficient, and from that day his bitterness mounted.

While the chiefs of the two other fighting services, General Georges and Air-General Vuillemin, preferred to be "voluntarily retired" rather than join the crawl, the sailor swallowed Vichy, anything, in pursuance of his "*Angleterre paiera!*" and as they used to say he had "the Gascon jet," certain naval occasions at the Hotel du Parc can be imagined.

Progressively, other happenings sent his dander up and up. As when we damaged the *Richelieu* and supported General de Gaulle off Dakar. As when the R.A.F. seriously set about bombing French ports. Two of these, Lorient and Dunkirk, Darlan largely rebuilt, and he now storms that we should pay all damage. (And, indeed, why not undertake to rebuild if that should keep the French Fleet out of Axis clutches?) Finally, the Admiral rebels against the blockade, and defies us by convoying food ships to Marseilles. (Does he really wish to provoke an "incident"?)

If the French as a whole see in Darlan the honourable chief of a popular service, a man of striking ability and character, who was not to blame for the catastrophe, and whose outraged professional feelings are understandable, they overlook two influences.

AMIRAL DE LA FLOTTE JEAN FRANÇOIS DARLAN: Awarded the G.C.V.O. by Britain in 1938, and the C.B. for his part in the Dunkirk evacuation of the B.E.F. in 1940. He is now the second most important figure in France and Marshal Pétain's main prop

A Detailed Study by FERDINAND TUOHY

During the *débâcle* Darlan had greater dread of a Communist rising than of the encroaching Boche monster. In particular, was he prompted towards "collaboration" with the supposed anti-Comintern conqueror by reason of uncertainty in regard to the Fleet personnel below deck. He remembered Kronstadt and Kiel, how sailors have a way of going "red" in a *débâcle*; fresh in his mind was his having to stop naval humanitarian work in 1938 at Spanish ports because his crews were so unneutrally pro-Republican when ashore. Crews hailed overwhelmingly from Britanny and the wideawake Parisian, Marseilles and Bordeaux regions, and despite all pampering *les gars de la marine* never did conceal a majority "Left" inclination.

Weygand has, it seems, admitted to a like error of seeing a Communist peril where it could never have materialised in the circumstances.

In Darlan's case there was the further notorious fact of many of his 4500 officers harbouring a form of Mediterranean sea fascism vaguely directed at ousting the British from this area, but more firmly rooted in historical jealousy. It came out well in the writings of retired admirals and in the novels of Claude Farrère who was also historian of the French Navy. It wasn't only Trafalgar that still rankled (Darlan's great-grandfather, by the way, was in the *Redoubtable*); these professional sailors whose fathers had launched the first ironclad, torpedo-boat and submarine, blamed the British for the French Fleet running to seed between 1912 and 1922 while we collared the sea under the sign of the Entente, and they also held that we prevented French naval re-birth at the Washington Conference.

Darlan precisely became their hero when he contrived this re-birth before and after the London Conference of 1930. That was when Whitehall saw him first at pugnacious Tardieu's side.

Put "Oran" on top of all this, and the animosity of Darlan and his kind offers small mystery. The question is—will this hostility change in the light of Taranto and Sidi Barrani and now that apostle Laval, who openly detested us as "fools and criminals," has moved on to "Abetz" Paris, leaving Darlan in the centre of calmer, less hating colleagues who are well aware that the R.A.F. has wiped out a deal of "Oran" in the minds of most French people?

Much depends on whether Darlan still considers Britain's defeat as inevitable, and this is where the new American Envoy to Vichy, and what he has to say, may be decisive. Nor could there have been a happier choice than a sailor, Admiral Leahy, now that a French admiral is on the bridge at Vichy. If the latter faithfully implements Pétain's formula of "not accepting political engagements contrary to the honour of the Navy and Army," all may yet be well. But we must envisage other possibilities.

If we sank or damaged several of the biggest ships, thereby defeating a terrible menace to Admiral Cunningham, that left intact eighty submarines and close on 150 destroyers and T.B.D.s, few older than 1930 and most of them in fine shape; in fact, the very vessels that could do us grievous hurt at this stage of our "life-line" struggle in the Atlantic. Nor does this take into account surviving undamaged light and heavy cruisers, especially of the 10,000 "Foch" class which used to be Darlan's delight.

The Fleet is understood to be principally at Bizerta, Toulon, Casablanca, and Dakar. Other ports open to it are Marseilles, Séte, La Nouvelle, Port Vendres, Bone, Algiers, Mers-el-Kébir (Oran), and Agadir. Outside Admiralty Intelligence, we do not know (*a*) what repairs have been effected following our bombardments; (*b*) what degree of disarmament control the German and Italian Commissions have effected.

At all events, as the Darlan Period opens we behold a much more serious proposition than Laval. In Darlan the Chief of State possesses the core of his ideal: a military dictatorship camouflaged from *les civils*, and Pétain publicly showed his sentiments when he was latterly the Admiral's guest "of State" on the battleship *Strasbourg* (an Oran casualty) in Marseilles harbour. One can well understand that the old Marshal would like nothing better than to have between him and the rude outside world, this active, skilful and trenchant sailor who, he feels, will not stab him in the back in order to inherit.

Ranking as a Marshal, Darlan is already the heir-apparent of the day and he is one who wants to rule and feels he can rule. For years he has been ambitious and conscious of his growing power. He has qualified not as the student, but as the alert mind knocking round the world, and at fifty-nine, small, stocky, jaunty of step and always with a pipe on, he is thoroughly alive. The "desk Darlan," all bald dome and grey hairs and horn-rimmed spectacles, is not the true one. For one thing, the glasses cancel the effect produced by very penetrating, dark brown eyes.

Darlan fought the last war exclusively on land, with a battery. He got out of sea service at the start, realising that the French Fleet was not going to cut much ice, and participated in all the big battles in France, with a spell at Salonika. Then he went back to the Far East—he loved the China Seas best. The most important part of his later service, until he began to rise vertically, was his long years as instructor and commander in the training cruiser *Jeanne d'Arc* now at Martinique with 300 cadets aboard. More than any other, Darlan "raised" the young French naval officer of to-day.

Which way will he steer the Vichy barque? However oddly we may think he has acted, we should keep in mind the kind of things that hang on the stand he takes. On the one hand, allowing Hitler the use of French sea power would be to gamble on a Nazi victory, which, whatever else it did, would dress France in a lasting world shame. But if he refuses, should he ever have to? All we need do is to picture a British admiral sailing away to Canada, leaving his beloved homeland to risk another "Poland" and with 2,000,000 of her sons held by a foe that stops at nothing.

DIRECTING OPERATIONS IN THE WESTERN DESERT: Major-General Beresford Peirse, with two of his officers, in front of a captured Italian lorry which is now being used in the further operations against the enemy in the desert. Since this picture was taken the battle has moved farther to the west to Bardia, where a further 25,000 prisoners have been captured, making over 63,000 in all, as well as vast stores of war material. In this later part of the campaign Australian troops have played a very big part, indeed, instilling terror in the hearts of the Italian enemy

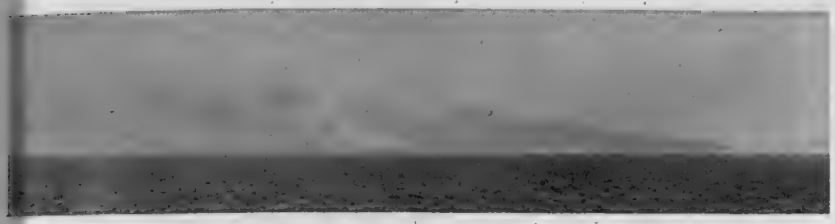
THIS COMMANDER HAD CHARGE OF THE FORCES WHICH TO A LARGE EXTENT BORE THE BRUNT OF THE ATTACK ON SIDI BARRANI: HE IS HERE SEEN WITH HIS STAFF OFFICERS AMONG THE DEBRIS

SUN-TANNED AUSTRALIAN SOLDIERS ABOUT TO PITCH THEIR TENT NEAR AN OASIS IN THE WESTERN DESERT. THESE ARE THE MEN WHO TRIUMPHED IN SUCH SIGNAL FASHION AT BOTH SIDI BARRANI AND BARDIA

THE TYPE OF TOUGH AUSTRALIAN WHO HAS BORNE THE HEAVIEST OF THE FIGHTING AT SIDI BARRANI AND, LATER, AT BARDIA—THE FINEST FIGHTING MATERIAL IN THE WORLD

AFTER SIDI BARRANI—BARDIA!

And First Pictures of the Royal Navy in Action Against the Italians Off Sardinia



ALL THAT WAS SEEN OF THE GALLANT ITALIAN NAVY—A LINE OF SMOKE ON THE HORIZON AS THEY SCUTTLED FOR SAFETY

UNITS OF THE ROYAL NAVY WHICH TOOK PART IN THE ACTION AGAINST THE ITALIAN FLEET SOUTH OF SARDINIA ON NOVEMBER 27

H.M.S. "RENOWN" PROCEEDING TO ATTACK THE ITALIAN FLEET, WITH HER BIG GUNS POINTING TOWARDS THE FLEEING VESSELS

TWO OF OUR CRUISERS UNDER FIRE OFF SARDINIA—SHELLS CAN BE SEEN FALLING WELL CLEAR OF OUR SHIPS

It will be remembered that on November 28 the Admiralty issued a communiqué which stated that on the previous day our naval forces, operating to the westward of Sardinia, had received reports from reconnaissance aircraft that enemy forces, consisting of two battleships and a large number of cruisers and destroyers, were at sea about seventy-five miles to the north-eastwards. Our forces at once increased to full speed and altered course to close the enemy, in the hope of bringing him into action. The accompanying pictures show some of the units of the Fleet during the action which ensued: they were taken from on board one of the cruisers. The action helped to complete the work previously carried out at Taranto!

THE "ARK ROYAL" HAS MANY TIMES BEEN "SUNK," YET SHE IS STILL PLAYING A BIG PART IN OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

One of the most outstanding successes of the German radio has been the sinking of the aircraft-carrier *Ark Royal*. First she was sunk by the Germans and then by the Italians: bombers of both these countries have actually seen her disappearing beneath the waves. Yet she is still playing a big part with the Royal Navy in the Mediterranean, and was very prominent in the action off Sardinia on November 27. This official picture shows the Italian attack on the aircraft-carrier: bombs dropped near the vessel send quite a lot of water into the air, but fall harmlessly astern

AFTERMATH AT SIDI BARRANI

And Towns Bombed and Captured by the British Forces

A CAPTURED GUN IN THE MAIN STREET OF SIDI BARRANI: This large-calibre gun was one of over three hundred captured during the Sidi Barrani battle. It was carried on heavy double-tyred wheels and probably intended for defence against naval bombardment

BY THE SAD SEA WAVES OF THE SIDI BARRANI COAST: The flow of battle has passed westwards towards the Libyan frontier; on the beach near Sidi Barrani remains this stranded Italian light tank, equipped with every device the designers could incorporate in this up-to-date model

BRITISH ARTILLERY PASSING THROUGH BATTERED SIDI BARRANI: The buildings give clear evidence of the effect of the British naval bombardment. Sidi Barrani, although it became of great importance in Italian communiqués, was quite small as regards buildings

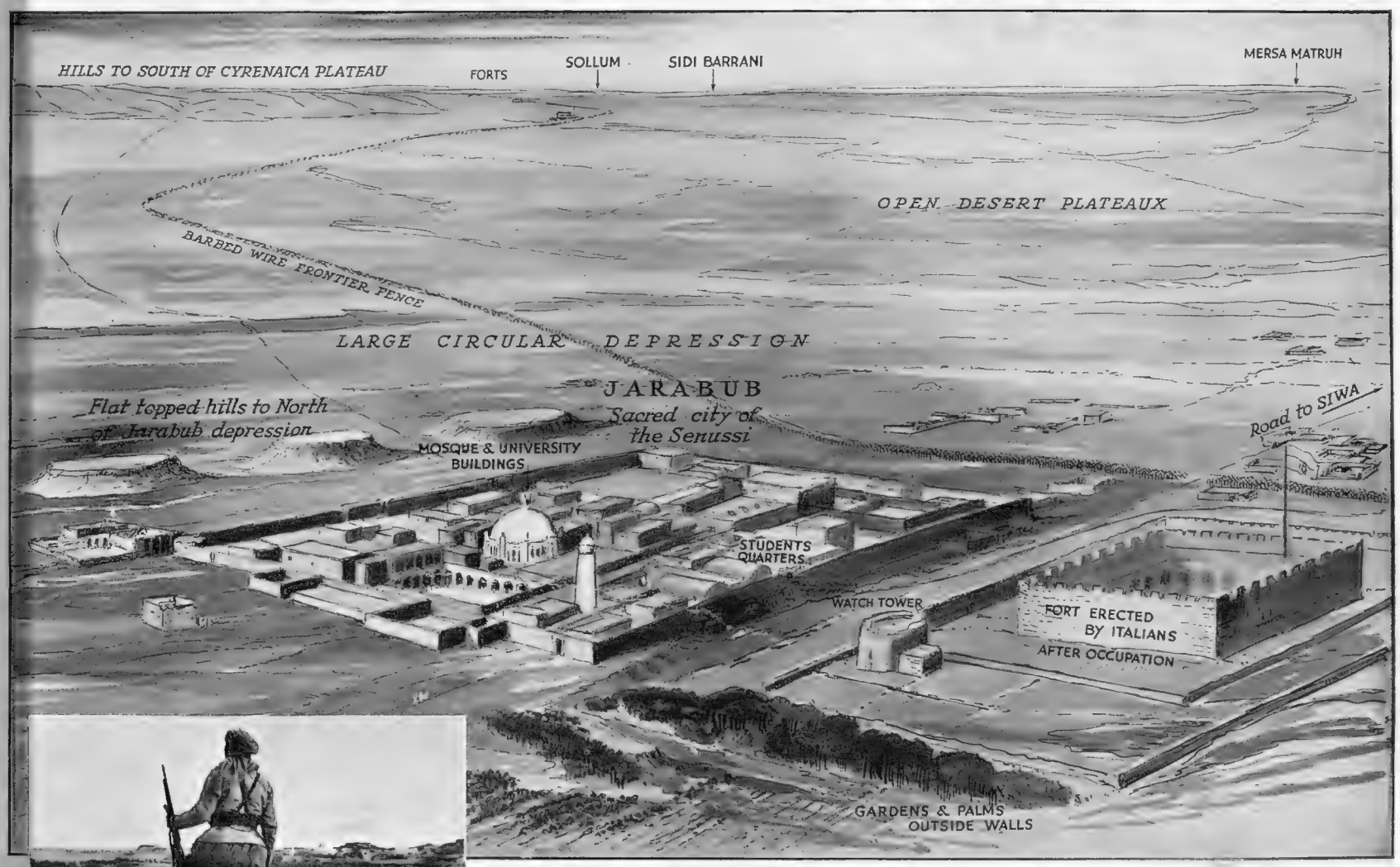
CRISS-CROSS TRACKS SHOW THE TREMENDOUS ACTIVITY ON THE BATTLEFIELD: The lorries seen here are moving towards Mersa Matruh and Alexandria, stuffed with enemy stores, chiefly food, so that prisoners might be fed en route from their usual food supplies

A SCENE OF DESOLATION IN THE MAIN SHORE STREET OF SIDI BARRANI

The success of the Battle of Sidi Barrani has been officially ascribed to the close co-ordination of the three Services, the Army, the Air Force and the Navy. It is the work of the last-named which is evident here in this deserted street of Sidi Barrani. The astonishing feature of the naval activities off this vital position of the Italian Army of Invasion was the lack of interference from the Italian Navy, which was within easy striking distance of the scene of operations. None of the light torpedo-craft, on which the Italian Navy had specialised, took any measures to sink or drive off the British vessels. It seemed a case where even desperate endeavours by light craft and submarine were called for. But none eventuated. So this was the result upon this enemy "strong point"

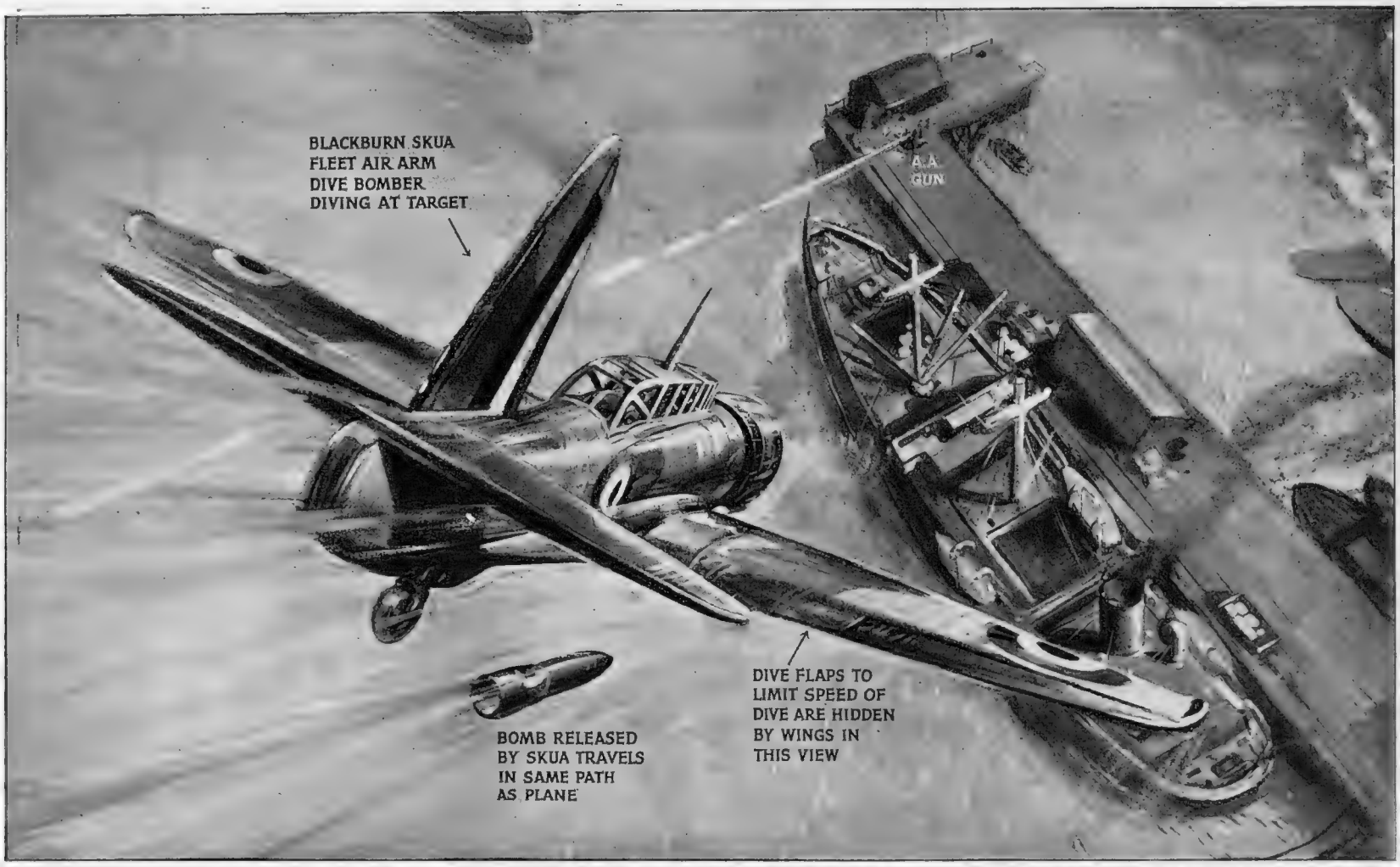
BENGHAZI, THE CYRENAICAN PORT WHICH RECEIVED THE ATTENTION OF THE R.A.F.

All during the attack on the Italian Army of Invasion the R.A.F. was co-operating both over the field of battle and over every possible point of supply within the Libyan frontier. Benghazi was no exception. The harbour has been successfully bombed on several occasions. The air view *on the right* records the results of one visit. The following is an explanation of the points lettered : **(A)** Large ship on fire. A cloud of smoke is pouring from the vessel ; **(B)** a sunken barge ; **(C)** on fire and sinking—another large vessel ; **(D)** a sunken destroyer ; **(E)** another ship partly submerged ; **(F)** other ships damaged. Oil from the bombed ships can be seen on the surface of the water. Benghazi was a typical Italo-Libyan town, with a good deal of outward show as regards buildings, gardens, and esplanades. General Graziani, when Governor of Libya, occupied Government House and also had an attractive châlet outside in a residential suburb, which avoided the great heat of the town. There was an officers' club-house, too, where much entertaining went on and where the officers managed, it is said, to have a very good time, in spite of the fact that being sent to Benghazi was regarded as a form of exile and punishment (as it was possibly intended to be). The white population spent much time bathing on the Juliana beach. There were various attempts at introducing the amenities of civilised life into this African city. The Berenice Theatre was excellently designed from the architectural point of view, but it is doubtful whether the production of plays equalled the excellence of the housing of the Berenice. A recent visitor to Benghazi records that a big, gleaming white hotel would not produce the meal one expected



THE CAPTURE OF JARABUB, THE FAMOUS SENUSSI CENTRE, BY A BRITISH CAVALRY CHARGE

When the Italians advanced across the Egyptian frontier to Sollum in September, the possibilities of a dash southwards by an enemy force towards Wadi Halfa or Khartoum by way of Jarabub and Kufra were much discussed by the military experts. The final decision arrived at was that a small mobile column might attempt a dash through the desert, but even that possibility has been negatived by a brilliant cavalry dash on the part of the British Forces, "sword in hand," who captured Jarabub with a rush. Jarabub stands towards the desert end of the barbed-wire frontier barrier erected by the Italians, but it had no commercial or real military significance. It was, until a few years ago, a Moslem university centre of the Senussi movement ; whether it has been permitted to function in this capacity recently is uncertain. A small "Beau Geste" fort had been erected outside the mud-walled Jarabub, in the centre of which rises the white dome of the mosque of Sidi Ben Ali. *On the left* is a native troop sentry standing on the battlements of the Italian fort outside Jarabub. He is looking towards its white dome and the flat-topped hills just beyond



THE DIVE-BOMBER STILL WATCHES OVER THE NORWAY COAST, AND HARASSES THE ENEMY'S TRANSPORT—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

The Germans are not being allowed to take things easy in Norway. Despite that Allied troops are no longer operating in these regions, the Fleet Air Arm are still carrying out reconnaissances there and hindering the free movements of enemy shipping. This picture illustrates a recent action, when Skua aircraft attacked shipping and the harbour works in the Haugesund area. One enemy supply ship of 4,000 tons alongside a jetty was hit and set on fire. Our drawing, incidentally, indicates the manner in which the Blackburn Skua carries out its dive-attacks. Unlike the shallow dives of the big land bombers, the Skua usually swoops down at an angle of some 70 deg.; the aircraft is lined up on to its target during the dive, and when the bomb is released, both bomb and aircraft follow the same course for a few seconds, until the latter begins to pull out of its dive. Whilst diving, the Skua has its brakes extended to check its downward speed for greater accuracy in bombing

"AERIAL WARFARE" of TWO KINDS—in NORWAY and GREECE

RETURN AT DUSK: A BRITISH BOMBER RETURNING TO ITS IMPROVISED LANDING-GROUND IN GREECE AFTER A RAID OVER THE ITALIAN LINES IN ALBANIA

On right—**A LITTLE-KNOWN ASPECT OF THE GREEK CAMPAIGN—HAULING GUNS UP THE SHEER ROCK-FACE IN ALBANIA**—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

After the first forward rushes of the Greek Army, the advance through Albania has of necessity been slowed up: this is not due to the Italians, however! There are two factors which must now be taken into account—the weather and the topographical nature of the fighting zone. Winter in Albania is more severe than most people realise. Although bordering the warm Adriatic, the storms and blizzards are very fierce and the cold intense. Even more severe, however, is the hilly country in which the Greeks are now operating. The drawing on the right shows the only method of progress in certain parts of the fighting zone, where guns *and men* have to be hauled up the sheer rock-face by ropes to take up new positions. The maps of Albania scanned by most readers of the Greek communiqués do not indicate such real difficulties as these!

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There are two schools of thought on this subject. One thinks that if we destroy all Germany's oil and smash all Germany's railways we can paralyse Germany's war effort. Which is true enough *if*. But Germany has lots of railways and roads and canals along which to transport oil and petrol, and we cannot hope to destroy them all and keep them destroyed, for, except when a big bridge is wrecked, any railway can be put in running order in four or five hours, even if a 1,000 kg. bomb has removed all four tracks.

And, although oil refineries take some putting together again if thoroughly smashed, there are lots of them, especially in Central and Eastern Europe and in Russia, so Germany's supplies of petrol and oil depend more on transport than on the refineries in Germany itself.

The other school of thought says that if we can smash the German aircraft factories and get full command of the air, as we had in France in 1918, we shall automatically win the war. Which is also true—*if*. Only in this case the *if* is not so big as in the other.

We know that all the bits and pieces of German aeroplanes and aero-motors are made in what we should call "dispersal factories"—not "shadow factories" in these days. One of Germany's best aero-motor manufacturers, the late Helmuth Hirth, told me all about his own system at a dinner-party at Potsdam more than four years ago, and I duly described it in print at the time—without effect, as usual. We always take five years to learn a lesson.

But, no matter how one may disperse the making of bits and pieces, the assembly of whole motors of 2,000 h.p. or so, and of whole aeroplanes, cannot be made a cottage or village industry. There must be big assembly plants. And if those plants can be kept well bombed there cannot be any aeroplanes to use the oil and petrol, or to put on the aerodromes either at home or in occupied territory, or to put in the air over this country or over the sea.

Without aeroplanes Germany's armies, mechanised infantry, tanks, guns and cavalry, although not useless, would be easily defeated. Without aeroplanes Germany could do no harm to the people in this country. And without air scouts at sea Germany's commerce-raiders and submarines would soon be at our mercy, or at any rate could do little harm to our seaborne supplies.

A nation without air power is a defeated nation. Lately our bombers seem to have been sent to attack submarine bases and oil supplies for enemy submarines—from which one may judge that Mr. Churchill looks upon the submarine menace as being greater than the air menace, although we were told officially not so many months ago that the submarine menace was well in hand. And so perhaps we are doing well to side-track our air power on to hunting the submarines in their bases. But at the finish the German Air Force is the greater menace, and therefore the German assembly plants for aeroplanes must be destroyed.

Which is why we must have those new aeroplanes about which the Americans have read so much, as aforementioned. Mind you, I do not say that what they have read is technically accurate, but they seem to have the general idea of a few of our new types.

What has happened is that an American aviation paper of the popular kind has evidently got hold of a bit of information about several of our new warplanes. It has published the names of the aeroplanes and of their makers, and the types to which they belong—whether single-seat fighters, multi-motored bombers, or what-not. And, given that much, any competent designer or slide-rule merchant in an aircraft factory could work out fairly well what such machines made by such firms would be likely to do in speed or carry in load, allowing for the normal rate of progress in his own nation's industry.

The names of the Hawker Tornado, descendant of the Hurricane, the Westland Whirlwind, known locally as the "Crikey," the Short Stirling, and the Avro Manchester were mentioned, along with a good deal of inaccurate information about them. Also the paper mentioned three new aero-motors, the Rolls-Royce Vulture and Griffin and the Napier Sabre, without saying much that was worth while.

Whether somebody who went to the States with our Purchasing Commission was too boastful, or whether some United States citizen who has been over here observing things has been allowed to observe too much and has gone home and talked too openly of what he was told in confidence, is not known. Some editors in the States, if they had had the information, might have refrained from publishing it for the sake of America's friendship for this country. Perhaps somebody in an official position in the States might enquire whether the editor who was responsible for these disclosures is of Anglo-American or of foreign origin and whether he has pro-British sympathies.

But the odd thing is that, presumably in the interests of Home Security, the Competent Authority in this country forbade for months the circulation in Great Britain of information which is available to all North and South Americans and Japanese, and (by way of Japan and Russia) to those Germans who matter. Only on January 1 did a British paper publish a few extracts.

I imagine that the official line of argument is that if the authorities allow the American paper to circulate here its readers would look on the information as being officially approved, and therefore accurate. For myself, I should look at it the other way. If the sale is forbidden, then the figures must be nearly enough accurate to be worth censoring, but if the paper can be sold freely, the figures and alleged facts are so unreliable that we do not care who gets hold of them.

THE FLYING TORPEDOES OF THE R.A.F.: The Torpedo Section of the R.A.F. Coastal Command lining up a large shoal of "tin fish" which will one day knock their heads against enemy warships, with disastrous results to the latter. The torpedoes are hauled on trolleys into position by the ground staff before disposal to the various carrying aircraft

In the meantime Lord Beaverbrook has mentioned the Whirlwind by name, and Sir Archibald Sinclair has spoken of the Stirling. Everybody in the R.A.F. and thousands outside it know what those machines are. Lots of us have known for more than a year. And lots of us know about sundry other new types now flying, the performances of which would surprise even that too-enterprising, hyphenated American.

Sir Walter Citrine, whom one would not call a jingo Imperialist, speaking at Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A., a few weeks ago said: "Except in the field of aeroplane production, we are relatively worse off than we were when the war began. We have definitely not overtaken Germany in armament production, in spite of some optimistic reports to the contrary."

I suppose Sir Walter knew what he was talking about, and if he was right he is not encouraging. Even if we are no worse off in aeroplane production than we were when war began, that is not very good. But as a matter of fact we are heaps better off in aeroplanes—without America's help so far.

When war began we had better aeroplanes than the Germans had. Our bombers carried more bombs and our fighters carried heavier armament than did the German machines. But we probably had less of them. I am not even sure of that, for we have never seen those vast German air fleets of which we heard so much before the war. To-day possibly we have more aeroplanes than Germany has. And, although some of the new German types which have been seen at a distance seem very good, I fancy that our latest types, so hush-hush in this country, will be more than a match for them.

Post Scriptum.—There has been much talk and writing lately about helping bombers to get off with a big overload. For any aeroplane will fly with a bigger load than it can lift off the ground or water. There are several methods of "assisted take-off." Catapulting is one. Putting a small heavily-loaded machine on top of a lightly-loaded one and lifting it at much cost of engine power, and so getting it up to flying speed, is another. Fitting an extra pair of detachable wings of large size on top of the weight-carrier, so that it takes off as a slow biplane, slips its upper wings and goes away as a fast monoplane, is another.

I now hear that the Germans are using rocket-propulsion to get their Junkers 88 bombers off with an overload. A big rocket is fixed under each wing. As soon as the machine gets going enough to lift its own tail off the ground, the rockets are fired, and give the machine a hard enough kick for a minute or so to boost it off the ground.

What happens if one rocket bursts instead of squirting fire and pressure, or if one motor cuts during the take-off, is not told. But rocket propulsion is an old fad in Germany. About ten years ago one sportsman made a rocket-propelled car, with awe-inspiring but not very practical results.

"DIGGERS" IN THE AIR: Four Gladiators of an Australian Squadron, while returning from a reconnaissance, met a formation of seventeen Italian Fiat Fighters and brought down three for certain, with two or three more "probables," for the loss of one Gladiator. Above are seen the Australian Flight Lieutenant (centre) and the Flying Officers who took part in the fight

GERMANY'S DREAM OF ATLANTIC DOMINANCE

The Great Strategic Importance of the Spanish Canary Islands; and the Geographical Importance of Dakar and Casablanca on Africa's Western Coast

THE ex-Kaiser Wilhelm II. dubbed himself "Admiral of the Atlantic," and when his fleet, with the exception of submarines and a few raiders, stayed in port or close to the German coasts he reaped a full harvest of ridicule. There is no doubt that the present German Government, in its desire to persuade Spain to enter the war and in the agreement that it forced on the Vichy Government, was impelled principally by the desire for convenient bases with which to attack British shipping in the Atlantic and neither Britain nor the United States can regard the possibility lightly. War-weary Spain appears to have been able to stand out, for the time being at least, against the suggested alliance by which she could not possibly gain anything but which would give Germany valuable bases in the Atlantic islands. France could not, and the French Navy built up bases in West Africa which Germany wants to control.

Both the Spanish and the French ports have their advantages and disadvantages, but to Germany at the present time anything is better than nothing, and there is no doubt that she will continue to make every possible effort to obtain their use.

The Canary Islands—originally named after dogs, not birds—are the most prosperous and valuable territory under the Spanish flag, so that it is easy to understand why General Franco is not anxious to sacrifice them for the benefit of Germany; they still form his greatest financial support. A volcanic group about sixty miles west of the African coast, half-way between the Straits of Gibraltar and where the Atlantic is narrowest, there are quite a number of them, beside the big ones known to every cruising passenger, and their geographical position would make them something like ideal for German interference with the British food ships from South America or the Cape.

Being of volcanic origin they contain many fine harbours, including quite a number which might be used by submarines if depot ships and stores could be smuggled out and which are practically unknown except to students of charts and the innumerable local fishermen. Las Palmas on Grand Canary Island and Santa Cruz on Teneriffe are major ports, beautifully sheltered and well equipped, and although it is unlikely that the batteries which protect them would have to be taken very seriously nowadays, they could be well defended by minefields.

In normal days Las Palmas handles more tonnage than any other port in the Spanish Empire, a big harbour behind a long breakwater with berths alongside and a second long mole under construction which will greatly increase the area when it is completed. There are any number of lighters and harbour craft at the service of ships which cannot get alongside and have to anchor, while there is an inner harbour which would be particularly snug for submarines. For a long time Las Palmas was one of the most important commercial coaling ports in the world, and it is still well equipped with depots of large capacity, while the Asiatic Petroleum Company has established there a big up-to-date oil fuelling station. The port is, however, weak in repair facilities, having only one patent slip able to lift ships of up to 1,500 tons out of the water, and it is repair facilities, especially on the engineering side, which German submarines want most. Las Palmas also has a big airport fully equipped for commercial work, and it is not the only one in the Canaries Group.

Santa Cruz is another really excellent harbour with up to 60 ft. of water behind good protection. The harbour works are not so elaborate as those of Las Palmas, but they also have been improving for several years past and the repairing facilities are rather better than at the bigger port, although they do not cater for ships of quite the same size. The opening of the Panama Canal has made a very big difference to the older trades of the Canaries ports, but the shipping and business community which is almost entirely British has shown the greatest enterprise in finding compensating business and, until the outbreak of war, the islands were prospering greatly; since then no official figures have been published, but there is no reason to think that they have slumped, and they have certainly very much more to lose than the mainland of Spain.

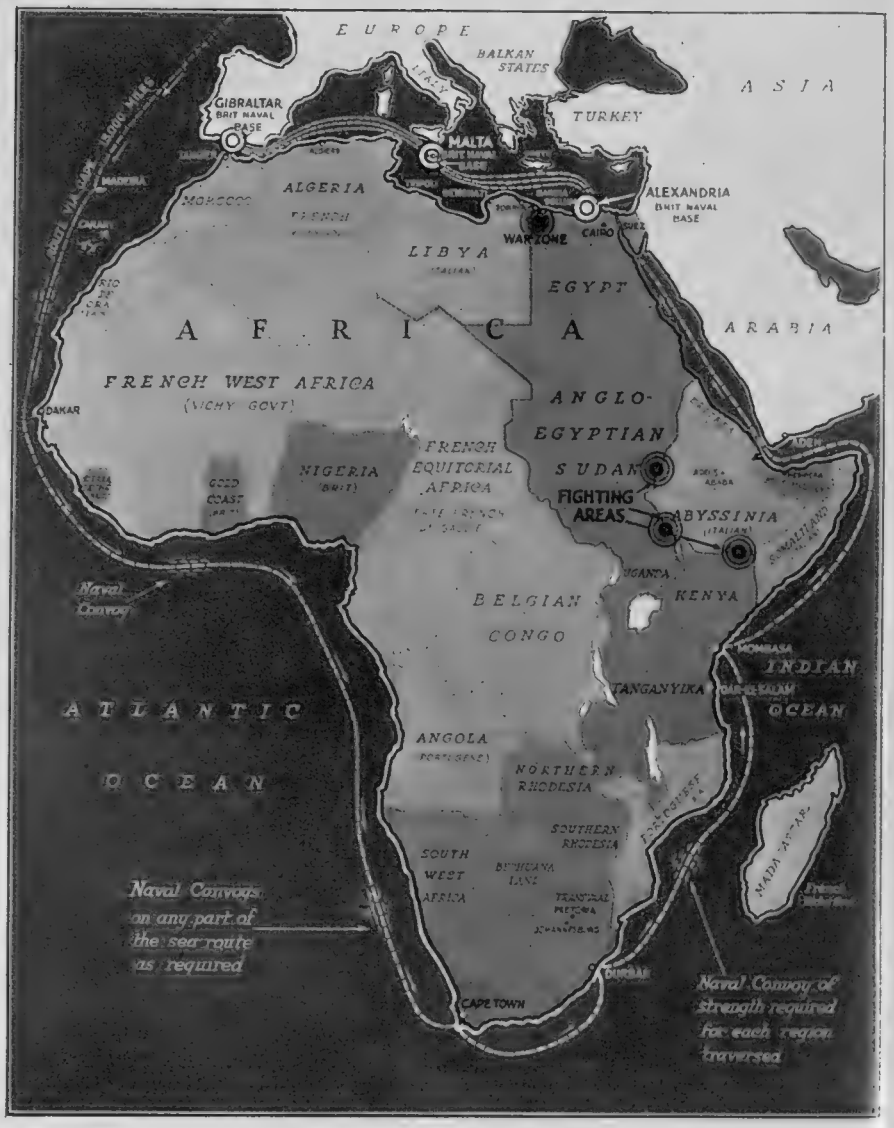
Geographically, the French naval base at Dakar has not quite the same advantages as the Spanish territory, but on the other hand it is situated at the narrowest point where the Atlantic divides Africa and America, so that its strategical position is excellent, and it is very well equipped as a minor dockyard. The town was founded in 1862, twelve months after France had declared a protectorate over that part of the West African coast, and the port was opened to commerce five years later. It was almost entirely artificial, and its construction demanded both high skill and very hard work from the French, but it was not until the railway to St. Louis was opened in 1885 that it began to have any trade worth speaking of. It became the capital of French West Africa in 1903, and in 1904 new harbour works were started which, when they were completed in 1908, made a big difference. The harbour was formed by two long jetties, one 6,840 ft. long and the other nearly 2,000, with an easy entrance 720 ft. wide, and inside there are three commercial docks with over 7,000 ft. of quay space and very fair water. During the late war British convoys made great use of the port and, in the shortage of defensive guns, outward-bound merchantmen would generally land guns there to be transferred to the next ships entering the danger area. Excellent bunkering facilities were provided, and by the time the war was over the port had been greatly improved. Immediately afterwards further improvements were undertaken, and in the last few years of peace it proved itself capable of handling over a million tons of cargo a year without any trouble.

Before the last war Dakar had been strongly fortified by the French and well equipped as a secondary naval base, with a dry dock 675 ft. long and a fine basin for submarines and torpedo craft. Since 1919 great improvements have been made in matters of detail, over half the port being devoted to purely naval work, while there has also been a fully-equipped base for aircraft for twenty years past.

Casablanca, further north on the Moroccan coast, is not so advantageously situated, but it is near enough to the Straits of Gibraltar to be exceedingly useful to German and Italian submarines. It was little more than an open roadstead until 1913, when plans were prepared for two long jetties with a 730-ft. entrance channel between them, protecting about 365 acres of water. Work was held up during the late war, but was prosecuted energetically from 1919 onwards, and when the first plan was finished extensions were immediately put in hand. It has been designed and developed principally for commercial purposes, but it is available for naval work as well, and it was used considerably by the French Fleet before the surrender.

The value of these ports to the German and Italian Navies in their declared intention of starving Britain out, which is such a foul offence against the laws of civilised warfare when the blockade is ours, is obvious. It is also obvious that their possession would mean a very serious threat to the United States as well as to Britain, and with the present policy of the Washington administration their possession by the Axis Powers would be regarded as nearly as much America's business as a German attempt to acquire a naval station in Martinique.

Frank C. Bowen



AFRICA AS THE NAVY SEES IT

In his summary of recent war developments, given to the House of Commons (December 19), the Prime Minister drew attention to the grave decisions relating to the despatch of arms and munitions to the Western Desert area. "The risks we had to take were well run here by the General Staff and the War Committee. When the staffs studied these matters here it was not easy, in July and August, to send precious tanks of the best quality and cannon, of which we were so short, on the long journey round the Cape of Good Hope to enable us, at first to defend ourselves, and later on to assume the offensive." A short time before, Admiral of the Fleet Lord Chatfield had also referred to the same matter. "Our convoys to the Middle East," he said, "are largely routed *via* the Cape and the Red Sea, a line of approximately 13,000 miles, calling for escorts of varying strength according to the areas they are traversing. There has never been a time in the history of steam when so much has been asked of ships' engines and of those who have to make them go round. Nor has there ever been a time when so much has been asked of our shipbuilders and engineers and the skilled workmen on whom the Navy ever relies. Obviously I cannot give you a comparative statement of the forces in the Mediterranean, but we have concentrated there a Fleet under Admiral Cunningham, able by its efficiency to contain the Italian Fleet, to hold the Straits of Gibraltar, and to protect the Suez Canal"

WEST AFRICAN ATLANTIC PORTS AND HARBOURS WHICH GERMANY DESIRES: THE SEABOARD FROM RABAT TO DAKAR AND THE ADJACENT ISLANDS

Germany's desire to get control of certain Atlantic ports shown on the above map has been obvious to the informed eye for some time. The possession of Las Palmas in particular would be especially useful to the Axis Powers in their attempt to stop our food and munition supplies. Their desires extend to Dakar in the south, but here at the time of writing it seems doubtful whether the Vichy Government will prove as subservient in this matter as might be desired. Vichy last week moved a number of warships from Toulon to her West African stations

THE BURNING OF LONDON CITY

The Enemy's Attempt to Fire the Historic Centre of London by Incendiary Bombs on the Night of Sunday, December 29

AFTER THE FLAMES HAD DIED DOWN—THE BURNED-OUT AREA NORTH-WEST OF ST. PAUL'S SEEN FROM THE GOLDEN GALLERY: In the immediate foreground are some buildings of St. Paul's Churchyard, all of them burned; farther back in the view, slanting upwards to the left, is all that remains of part of Paternoster Row, famous as the home of firms of publishers. In the centre of the view are the remains of Paternoster Square. Running from left to right across the top of the picture are Ave Maria Lane and Warwick Lane. The right-hand top corner shows part of Newgate Street. In two places the ruins are still smoking. It is interesting to note how steel girdering has remained in place, whereas wooden rafters have, of course, disappeared

FALLEN GIRDERS AND MASONRY BLOCK ALDERMANBURY, A WELL-KNOWN THOROUGHFARE CLOSE TO THE GUILDHALL: Aldermanbury bore an ancient name, the derivation of which was open to dispute; Stow said it came from the Burie or Court of the Aldermen and that he had seen the remains of the Old Hall. The historic street is in a sorry condition to-day

DESTRUCTION NEAR THE GIRDLERS' HALL IN BASINGHALL STREET: Farther to the east, fires wrought damage in the Basinghall Street district; this view was taken close to the Girdlers' Hall, one of the oldest of the City Companies' halls. The Girdlers were incorporated in 1449 and have as arms three grid-irons. The Jacobean hall has been severely damaged

SURVIVED THE GREAT FIRE, ONLY TO BE BURNED IN 1940: The interior of Allhallows, Barking, the "Toc H" church which overlooks Tower Hill. A few monuments have escaped

ST. MARY'S, A WREN CHURCH IN ALDERMANBURY: This church was begun about 1670 and completed about 1686. It has suffered the destruction of its roof

ST. LAWRENCE JEWRY HAD FINE INTERNAL DECORATIONS: This Wren church was completed about 1686. Sparks from its blazing roof helped to set fire to the adjacent Guildhall

WREN'S STRICKEN CHURCHES: *By Professor Geoffrey Webb*

ST. VEDAST, FOSTER LANE, HAD A GOOD COMMUNION TABLE AND REREDOS: This Wren church was finished in 1673. Burned roof timbers crashed on to the gallery

ST. ANDREW'S BY THE WARDROBE REVEALS A MASS OF BURNED TIMBER: This Wren church was begun about 1685 and completed about 1695

OF the City churches which suffered in the air raid of Sunday, December 29, perhaps the most important was St. Bride's, and its position hard by Fleet Street gives it an undeniable claim to be mentioned in any newspaper before all the others damaged on that night. St. Bride's was one of the first group of churches to be undertaken in the scheme for rebuilding the churches destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. The scheme was financed by a tax on coal coming into the City of London, and by 1670, when

ESCAPED THE GREAT FIRE TO BE BURNED IN THE DECEMBER BLAZE: St. Giles, Cripplegate, was previously hit by high explosive and incendiary bombs; on Sunday, December 29, fire burned the roof

CHRIST CHURCH, NEWGATE, AS IT NOW IS; A LATER WREN CHURCH: The church was burned in the Great Fire but was not rebuilt until 1687-1704. The wife of Baxter, the Nonconformist, was buried on June 17, 1681, "in the ruins"

THE ARCADING OF ST. BRIDE'S, FLEET STREET, AS IT NOW STANDS: This is one of the Wren type of churches exhibiting the basilica form, providing a good "preaching hall." St. Bride's was the first of this type

AN EXAMPLE OF THE BROAD, OPEN-DOMED WREN CHURCH: The church of St. Anne and St. Agnes in Gresham Street has lost its roof completely, as shown here. It was begun in 1676 and completed about 1687

THE COMMON COUNCIL CHAMBER OF THE GUILDHALL—BURNED OUT ON SUNDAY NIGHT, DECEMBER 29

The Co… Council can no longer sit in their octagonal council chamber. It lies to the north of the G… ; fortunately the chamber was not old. It was erected in 1885 and owing to the fact that it had an iron and glass roof there is no mass of charred timber in the picture, as in the case of the church interiors. The columns have flaked off in curious fashion

St. B… was begun, enough money had come in to … making a real start.

Th… d and galleried plan, of which St. B… s one of the earliest and one of the fines… n built, was in the architect's own opini… best solution of the problem of prov… preaching hall." Though St. Bride's was … church of this type that Wren built, … r variations of the design, such as Christ… Newgate Street, and St. Andrew's by the W… both burnt on that Sunday, may have … e technically efficient solutions of the prol… mbining pillars with a gallery, the early design has a charm which these others lack. The broad, open-domed scheme was generally used by Wren for smaller churches. Two of these have been severely damaged in air raids, St. Anne and St. Agnes, burnt on the 29th, and St. Mary Abchurch, damaged in an earlier raid. The other churches damaged on the 29th were of interest for particular features or fittings rather than for their architectural ingenuity. St. Vedast's, Foster Lane, is an example of this. The design of the body of the church cannot compare with the grander buildings for imaginative ingenuity, but the spire is one of the finest things Wren ever did.

The top finishings of St. Bride's steeple and the tower of Christ Church, Newgate Street, are also fine, and later, works.

Besides the "beautifying of the steeples" after the body of the church was built, extra and often splendid internal fittings were sometimes, provided, sometimes by private generosity. St. Lawrence Jewry, near the Guildhall, was a remarkable example of a church more renowned for the splendour of its internal finishings than for its purely architectural quality, but almost all the Wren churches burnt on that Sunday contained fine woodwork. It is in the destruction of these wooden fittings that our greatest loss perhaps consists. St. Stephen's, Coleman Street, for example, a church which had suffered much from restoration, contained a most splendid Communion Table and pulpit, and other fine carving besides. And another good Communion Table and Reredos was at St. Vedast's. Such works as these are often loosely ascribed to Grinling Gibbons, the best-known name among woodcarvers of the time. Gibbons, however, did hardly any work for the City.

A special word should be said of St. Lawrence Jewry, the Lord Mayor's church, and one of the most sumptuously equipped. There all the woodwork was good, but especially the organ case, and even more remarkable was the decoration of the Vestry room, not only for the quality of its panelling, but for its ceiling.

THE RUINED HALL OF THE HABERDASHERS COMPANY: The hall of this City company has suffered severely from fire. The site was bequeathed to the Company in 1478 by William Baker, Citizen and Haberdasher. The Haberdashers were originally called Hurrers and Milaners

DAMAGE IN THE VICINITY OF TRINITY HOUSE, TOWER HILL: A number of incendiary bombs were dropped on the Tower Hill district where Trinity House, the home of the Trinity Brethren, stands or, rather, used to stand. The building contained a number of interesting relics connected with the sea including two ancient globes. The building still smouldered when this picture was taken

WHEN THE FLAME AND SMOKE DIE AWAY

The LIFE of LONDON GOES ON

The life of London resumed its normal course as close up to the ruins as the police and A.R.P. workers would permit. In fact, there were cases of minor friction when merchants, business men, clerks and employees were kept out of buildings which they regarded as safe. Complaints were made of the delay in granting permits to occupy, so anxious was everybody to carry on, in spite of the smell of charred timber and damp but unburned offices. Of course, in too many cases the buildings were so thoroughly burned out that the business tenants could only glance at still-smoking ruins before rushing off to search for new premises. Everyone took a pride in carrying on, from the City Council itself down to the smallest burned-out tobacconist

THE CITY COUNCIL, DEPRIVED OF THE USE OF THE GUILDHALL, RESUMED ITS SESSIONS ELSEWHERE. HERE IS THEIR FIRST MEETING HELD IN THE MANSION HOUSE

DANGEROUS WALLS HAVE HAD TO BE BLOWN DOWN BY ROYAL ENGINEERS: HERE IS A WARNING NOTICE POSTED UP NEAR TOWER HILL

THE CORDWAINERS' NEW YEAR SERVICE WAS CONDUCTED AS USUAL IN THE CHURCH OF ST. ANNE AND ST. AGNES, GRESHAM STREET, BY THE BISHOP OF FULHAM AMONG THE CHARRED RAFTERS OF THE FALLEN ROOF

CITY WORKERS TROOP BACK PAST SOME OF THE BURNED-OUT CITY BUSINESS BUILDINGS. ALL THOSE WHO COULD SOON RESUMED THEIR WORK AMIDST THE RUINS OF THE CITY BUILDINGS

ANXIOUS TO START WORK: THE QUEUE OF BUSINESS PEOPLE WAITING TO GET PERMITS TO ENTER THEIR PREMISES IN BASINGHALL STREET AFTER THE FIRE ATTACK BY THE GERMANS ON THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 29

DYNAMITING THE RUINS: A SCENE IN THE CITY, WHERE R.E.'S HAVE BEEN BUSY AT WORK ON THE DEMOLITION OF UNSAFE BUILDINGS AFTER THE GREAT FIRE-RAISING RAID: The actual moment of explosion, when a mass of unsafe masonry was brought down by dynamite in a partially ruined City street. So skilfully was the charge placed that the group in the foreground hardly troubled to move from the spot!

A BIG BLAST AS A WHOLE BUILDING COLLAPSES AFTER IT HAD BEEN DYNAMITED BY THE R.E.'S. This work has been going on at many points in the City

SOLDIERS TACKLE AN UNSAFE WALL WITH ROPES: So badly damaged was this façade that man-power alone was sufficient to bring it hurtling down

An ESCAPE from the WAR

A True Picture of Famous Whigs; A Yardstick of Fame and Shame; and Some Links with the Past

A TRUE PICTURE AT LAST.—I have been reading with great pleasure Lord Bessborough's *Lady Bessborough and her Family Circle*. It gives us at last a true picture of the lives and characters of those two famous Spencers—Georgiana Devonshire and Harriet Bessborough—who, in a literary sense, have for so long been butchered to make a holiday for sensation hunters and an income for female "book-makers."

We are given an opportunity to see these people at last, not through the spectacles of our day, but through those of their day, and, with all their admitted faults and frailties, their infidelities, extravagance, gambling propensities, exclusiveness and perverted privilege, we find them, not museum pieces, not exhibits for the coroner of morality, but women and men of our own race, as kindly dutiful, sane and sensible as ourselves, and in some vital particulars better Christians, citizens and parents than were to be found between 1919 and 1939. We have always misjudged them, thanks to the sensation-makers who fastened on and magnified their infidelities and suppressed their sound qualities, for the sake of circulation. Now in their own letters and diaries, set forth in continuous narrative form, they speak at last for themselves. And very interesting is the new story they tell. The "scandalous wives" were wives and mothers whose deaths threw their families into transports of despair. They, who sinned so greatly, laboured all their lives to keep their children straight and their homes happy and harmonious, and to succour the unfortunate among their kin and acquaintances, tenantry and dependants. They paid more attention to religion—in an age of free-thinking—than ever we did before 1939, and always scorned the shams and hypocrisies which we have cherished too long.

Interesting Lights.—Strange lights this book throws on social history, among which I will mention a few at haphazard. Why was it that these privileged folks, who had every available atom of colour, interest and comfort in their luxurious homes, would constantly shut up their houses for months at a time and wander slowly and uncomfortably across a dangerously disturbed Europe, enduring the misery of sleeping in filthy, primitive inns and taking the risks of infection from unsanitary conditions and bad food?

Again; the Ponsonby letters from Brussels, written just after Waterloo, wonderfully confirm Wellington's aphorism that there is nothing more tragic than a victory, except a defeat. Those letters reveal a very different view from that given by Creevey. Sheer misery of spirit lay over Brussels long after that crowning mercy.

Reading those old letters covering many years, we conclude with reasonable certainty that these figures of a hard and brilliant age were, in fact, far more sensitive, far more obedient to family ties, far more bound to social conventions of a finer kind, than ourselves, and I think, if their heads were a little softer, so were their hearts. For the rest, Professor Aspinall's notes are as accurate and full and concise as could be wished—a model of research and industry—and Lord Bessborough's linking matter is smooth and relevant and admirably welding.

One or two interesting discoveries evaded Professor Aspinall. In the sisters' letters there occur certain family cryptograms. "Mrs. Brown," for instance (as the Devonshire family have revealed), is a cryptic reference to Marie Antoinette, and, when the Duchess speaks of a "visit from the Prince"—well, she doesn't always mean the Regent Florizel!

A Handle to Your Name.—How many men in the past have planned and plotted and prayed and perspired to secure at last a "handle to their names"! Mr. Smith at last becomes Sir John Smith, K.B.E., or Sir John Smith, Bart., or even Lord de Vavasour. And it has been sweet to his ear to hear his new handle turned on the tongues of men.

But there was a higher stage of greatness reserved for a few. Beyond a certain point of eminence titles and handles cease to count and the original surname is all that matters. We do not speak of Signor Dante, or Herr von Goethe or Mr. Shakespeare; or indeed of Lord Byron or Miss Austen or Mr. Shaw; nay, we speak of Anthony Hope, not Sir Anthony Hawkins, and of Galsworthy, not Mr. Galsworthy. In literary reviews and criticism, a living author may assess his own merits (or at least fame) by the yardstick of whether he is given his handle or not. If no handle is given him, he is acknowledged as having arrived. So it was until 1939. Then the late Neville Chamberlain, aided and abetted by Press and Radio, invented a new fashion—a handle yardstick based, not on fame but on shame. Herr Hitler suddenly became "Hitler" in Parliamentary pronouncements, and to-day there is a very clear distinction between infamy and non-proven infamy.

We speak and write of Hitler, Mussolini, Ribbentrop, Ciano, Goebbels, and so on, but Molotoff remains a Monsieur and Czaki a Count. . . . You can clearly cast back to the day when Laval ceased to be M. Laval; it was the morrow of his finally proven infamy. The dropping of his handle was not due to suddenly acknowledged fame or eminence. It is the *locus classicus* of the new yardstick of infamy. All of which is much more important than you may at first think it, and every word of it true—and new.

A MEET BUT NO HUNT: A great crowd of people assembled last week in the vicinity of Cecily Hill for the meet of the V.W.H. (Cirencester) hounds, belonging to Earl Bathurst. The hounds were on parade, but owing to an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease near Buscot, which brings Cirencester within the fifteen-miles standstill limit, no hunt could take place. It is, nevertheless, refreshing to reflect that it was neither Hitler and his threats nor Göring and his murder-bombers who were responsible for the cancellation of the meet

The Bridges of Time.—Always there is an interest for certain types of mind in longevity. Some people derive comfort from evidence of the power in human beings to resist death long after the appointed time. They argue that, if that man or woman can live to be a hundred, why not (with due precautions) they themselves? Others, with a sense of the past, are thrilled to hear of human links with events that seem divided by a vast gulf from their own age. Such links open for them a door long closed, of which they believed the key was lost. In my experience as a journalist, I have found that "links with the past" evoke more interest from correspondents than any other subjects, unless it except religious controversy and devices to ease the housewife's difficulties. For decades the sixth Earl of Albemarle was a notable link with the past. He fought at Waterloo at a tender age in the 14th Regiment and was the last notable survivor of that famous day. He survived until 1891, and he had a daughter living into the 1930's.

The *locus classicus* of longevity in Britain was Old Parr—Thomas Parr (1483-1635) who lived in ten reigns, had a child at the age of 102, and died at 152. (Believe it or not!)

Charles James Fox was credited with the glory of having two aunts, between whose deaths an interval of 170 years elapsed. Such instances are not unique. In a case heard in the Australian Courts two decades ago a witness was asked if he had not had a sister.

He admitted it. When did she die? "150 years ago," he replied. You can work out for yourself how such a thing might happen in the case of a half-sister. George Russell, a shrewd journalist in his day, was ready with his instances of longevity to satisfy his public. His father spoke to an old Highlander who fought at Culloden, a fact which bridged a wide gap in Edwardian days.

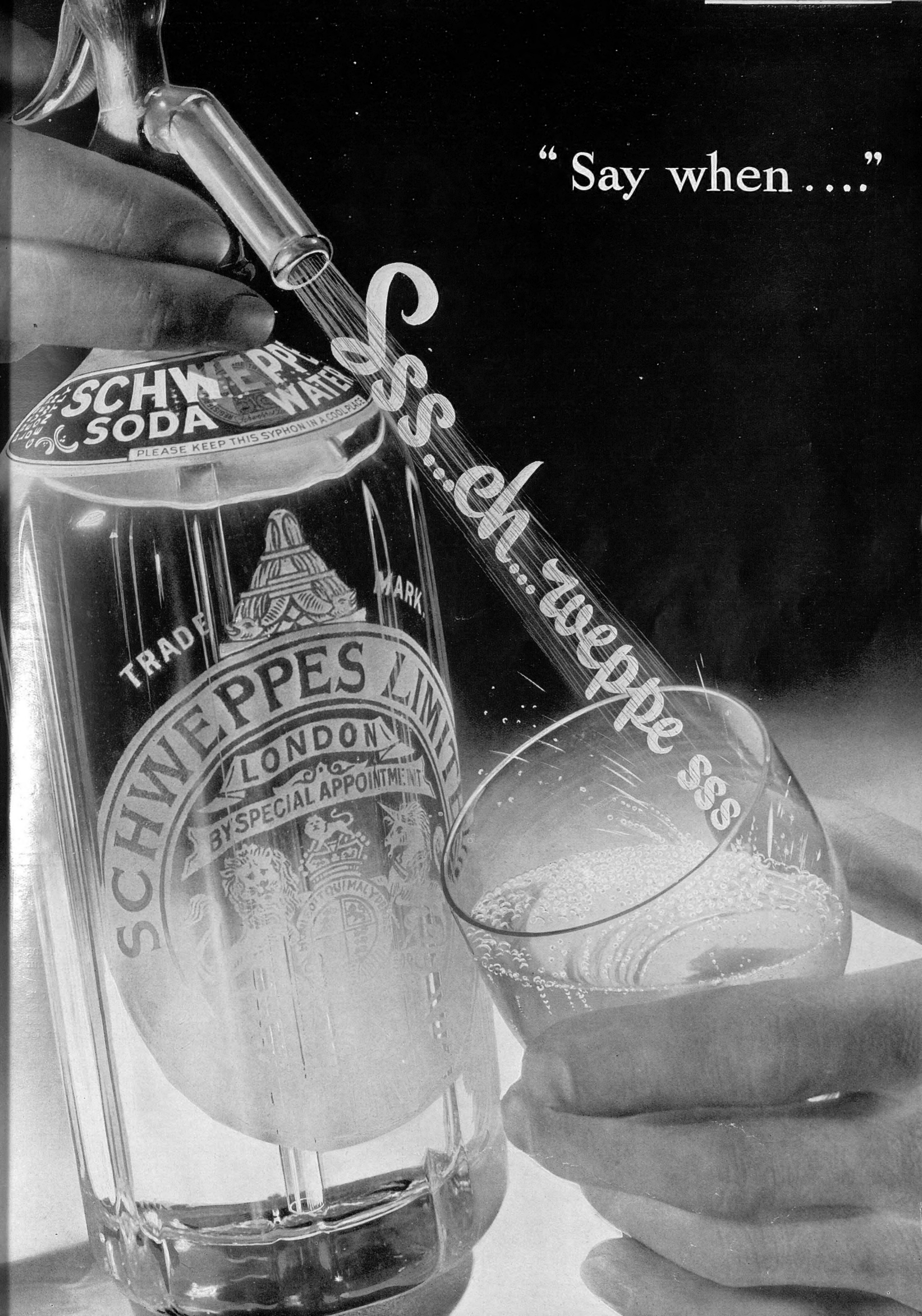
Lord John Russell's last surviving child, Lady Agatha, was a link with the past, alive at Hindhead until "the other day." Her father walked and talked with Buonaparte.

Sir Algernon West, the last of the raconteurs, provided this instance: When he first went out in London Society, a well-known figure in West End drawing-rooms was Captain Maude, R.N., who could declare that his grandfather was twelve years old when Charles II. died. And finally Lord Chancellor Halsbury. When at the Hotel Cecil in the Parliament Bill crisis before the Great War he rose to address the Die-Hards, he could recall that he was born a decade before the great Reform Bill of 1832 had laid violent hands on the "ancient constitution" of Britain; born in days when more than one Member of Parliament still attended the House in pigtails.

Heating Fuel.—In a cheerful war commentary, following a particularly successful day in the air during which, in various spheres, we destroyed about thirty enemy planes for the loss of four or five, and did some notable damage to military objectives at both ends of the Axis, Sir Philip Joubert told us to keep our thoughts on December 22 and to remember that thereafter the nights would be shortening and the enemy bombers would find decreasing opportunities to inflict damage. It is true that slowly after December the days grow longer. Sir Philip optimistically admitted that on December 21 he "sees spring round the corner," and dreams of sunny days again. Which is vaguely comforting. Nevertheless, to get back to realities, the English winter lies all ahead of us after December, and it usually lasts on and off until nearly May. During those months it is necessary to warm one's house, and at the moment of writing the prospects of doing that are not very rosy. The coal situation is very grave and (despite hopeful official statistics) no stocks exist in my southern area. In the early autumn we heard of Government plans to establish great local dumps of coal throughout the country. But nothing came of it—here, at least. And now the difficulties, great in August, are greater.

The opportunity has gone and the lost time cannot be made up. Many of us did our best to store coal and coke to the capacity of our storage accommodation, but even in August we could not obtain our demands, and already our reserves are running out, with little prospect of relief. With the bitter memory of last year's bungle fresh in mind, and in face of the known difficulties of last autumn, we may feel that the authorities might have done more to avert a still more bitter fiasco this winter. They spoke comfortable words last summer, but even those of us who discounted half their promises must expect to be caught short of the bare minimum necessary to keep the temperature of a country house endurable through the winter.

J. G.



"Say when ...."
Sss...ch...weppe sss
SODA
PLEASE KEEP THIS SYPHON IN A COOL PLACE
TRADE
MARK.
LONDON
BY SPECIAL APPOINTMENT

SCARBOROUGH FISHERMEN TAKING PART IN A CHARITY FOOTBALL MATCH ON THE SANDS TO ASSIST THE FISHERMEN'S CHARITIES

STUDENTS, WHO FORMERLY ATTENDED ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL, SEEN IN THE COMMON-ROOM OF THEIR NEW HOME IN SURREY

QUIET CORNER

Peaceful Activities in War-time

On left—
A charity football match was recently played on the beach at Scarborough. This is an annual affair between the fishermen and firemen of the trawlers. The top-hats which they wear have to be kept on their heads while scoring, otherwise the goal is lost. There are collectors busy on the beach and the contributions from the huge crowds are for the Fishermen's Charities

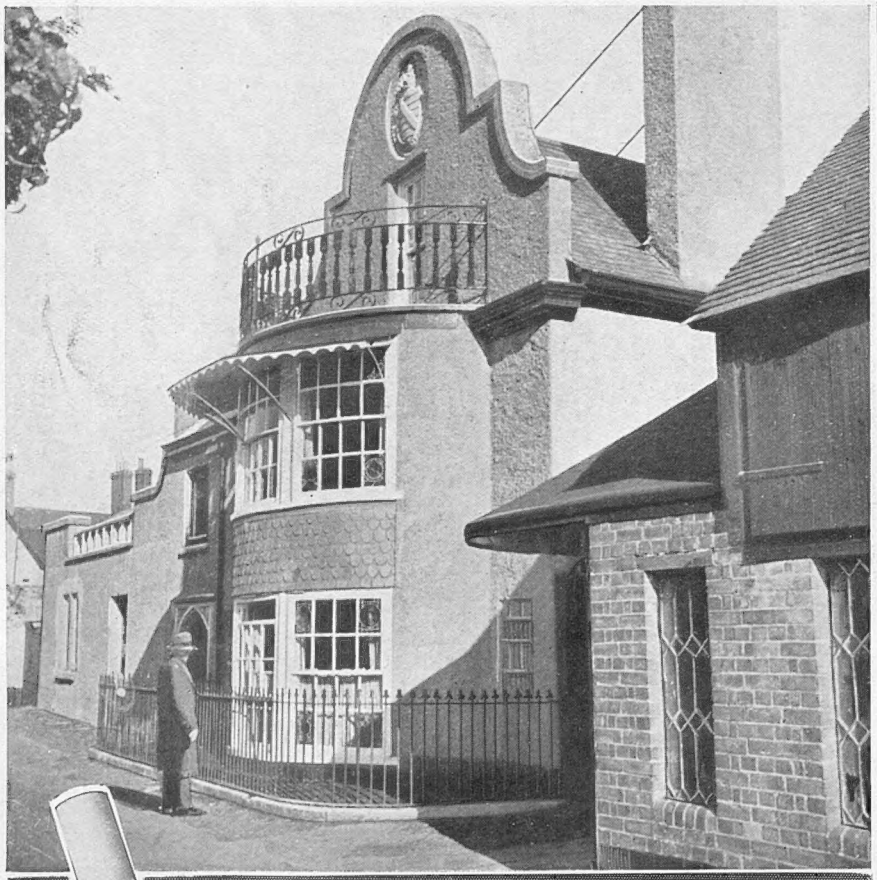
On right—
This picture shows some of the girls attached to the Land Army who attended the first of a series of milking competitions to be held in various parts of Gloucestershire under the auspices of the Women's Land Army Committee. The contest was held at the Home Farm, Cirencester Park

On left—
St. Thomas's Hospital was so severely damaged during one of the recent raids that it became impracticable to carry on the Medical School on its own site. The lease of a large school recently vacated in Surrey was obtained which, together with other houses in the district, has been fitted with the necessary laboratories, lecture rooms, etc., for the teaching of pre-medical subjects

On right—
Historic Saltmarche Castle, Herefordshire, now forms the surroundings in which the boys of Westminster School take their lessons. They live in four houses near the castle, one of which is an old Queen Anne house which has stood empty for a considerable time and the boys spend several hours each day making it suitable for their living quarters

SOME OF THE LAND GIRLS WHO COMPETED IN A RECENT MILKING CONTEST WHICH WAS HELD AT CIRENCESTER ON LORD BATHURST'S FARM

BOYS OF WESTMINSTER SCHOOL MAKING UP THE ROAD LEADING TO THEIR WAR-TIME HEADQUARTERS NEAR SALTMARCHE CASTLE, HEREFORDSHIRE



NOTABLE NUMBERS

7, FERRY ROAD, TOPSHAM. The House of Sir William Follett, born 1798, famous Attorney-General who, being paralysed, addressed the House of Commons from a high chair.

Yet another famous number with smokers is Player's No. 3—that well-known cigarette of delightful mellowness and excellent flavour, distinguished for the *finer* quality of its selected leaf.

PLAYER'S NUMBER 3 EXTRA QUALITY CIGARETTES

PLAIN OR CORK TIPS
20 FOR 1/10
50 FOR 4/6
50 TINS (plain only) 4/7

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THE SPHERE TRAVEL BUREAU—Continued from page iii of cover.

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In Quest of Good Hotels

By ASHLEY COURTENAY

SHELTERED nooks! Not so easily come by in January, and wartime at that. Yet they are to be found, sequestered away in all sorts of unexpected corners.

Down Goodrington way, Paignton's offspring, I have for the last few days seen people sunning on seats, sheltered from the north by the red, warm cliffs of Devon. A week earlier, down on the Helford River, the sun blazed forth as I gathered cockles and mussels from under my feet. Here the climate is as mild as anywhere in England.

And just around the corner lay Falmouth, a land of palms and sub-tropical shrubs. In the grounds of the Falmouth Hotel I saw raspberry-canes which had only recently yielded their last crop, whilst hundreds of camelias were in bud, and I was promised an armful if I came back on New Year's day.

But further eastward there will be shelter and sunny corners awaiting me, and the Bournemouth district will be one of my first choices. There is a host of possibilities. If I were in the position to take a private suite I cannot imagine anything more agreeable than the pine-scented air and the sunny surrounds of Canford Cliffs Hotel, some few miles from the centre of Bournemouth itself, but easily reached by bus, if the necessity arose.

But somehow Canford Cliffs is a sufficient lure in itself. There are shops around the corner in the model village. There are level walks along the cliff side, and for those who like their game of golf, Parkstone Golf Links are in the immediate rear.

It is some time since I have mentioned Canford Cliffs in these columns, and it may be that there are some who do not know that a lift and a new wing were added shortly before this present war commenced. It has, in accommodation, put Canford Cliffs Hotel right into the five-star rank, though in point of excellence it had been in that category for many years.

Farther eastwards Worthing is one of our sunniest Southern Resorts, and although I am temporarily out of touch with the present hotel situation, a number are open or are reopening. But in the immediate neighbourhood are a number of hotels which nestle themselves in the folds of the South Downs. Findon Manor Hotel, at Findon, the small Clematis Cottage, at Washington. Nor must I forget Chequers Hotel, at Pulborough, which, though on the top of the hill, is well sheltered. Then, too, at the western end of the South Downs is the Gate House Guest House at Midhurst, so well protected from the elements and so snug within that my only complaint is that there never seems a vacant room there.

The weather prophets tell us that after a wet November we must expect a hard, cold winter. Well, residence at any of the places I have suggested means a compromise with the worst that our British climate can offer us. Snow is rarely to be seen, and not at all at many of the places mentioned, and just as the deer come down from the hills to the plains, it is but natural that we should seek districts less exposed once winter sets in in earnest. But let it not be forgotten that to find warmth we do not have to necessarily go further south. There are places in the north which can show a better weather record than the south, as, for example, Grange-over-Sands, in Lancashire, and the Mull of Galloway, in Scotland.

For those who have to remain in more wintry places, look for central heating, a sun lounge, where with the aid of Vita glass Mr. Eastwind and Mr. Jack Frost can be kept outside. It is worth sacrificing for our own personal comforts to pay that extra £1 a week for a few months, and although we are never likely to find a system of central heating which would suit all, a comfortable bedroom and a capacious chair can always provide the happy solution, especially if there is a controllable radiator.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

A. L. P., Leicester.—There is shelter to be found in the Lake District as much as anywhere else, and for a warm, sheltered hotel you will not do better than the Langdale Chase Hotel, on the shores of Lake Windermere. I have not heard from them recently, but I expect they must be very busy. Grange-over-Sands is a very pleasant place, but I am afraid that the hotel you would like there—Graythwaite Manor—will be full.

M. F., Richmond.—Although the New Forest is close to Southampton I see no reasons for not staying there, and though a number of hotels are no longer available, I hear, though I 've not been told officially, that the Montagu Arms at Beaulieu has been reopened.

Mr. Ashley Courtenay is always pleased to advise "Sphere" readers of hotels, both large and small, known to him personally. Letters, accompanied by a 2½d. stamp for reply, should be addressed to him, c/o the Editor, THE SPHERE, *32-34, St. Bride Street, London, E.C.4. Personal and telephone inquiries, however, cannot be accepted.*

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